Central BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
presented by

DR. GEORGE JOHNSON

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

69

ONE HUNDRED PRAYER MEETING TALKS *and* PLANS

INCLUDING 1200 ILLUSTRATIONS

TEXTS, THOUGHTS ON THE THEME
OUTLINES, QUESTIONS *and*
ILLUSTRATIONS

100 SUGGESTIONS AND TESTED PLANS FOR
SUCCESSFUL PRAYER MEETINGS

INTRODUCTION BY
REV. F. B. MEYER, B. A.

F. M. BARTON
CLEVELAND, OHIO

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God alone has promised in Scripture, He is prepared to make good by His Power. Not only is there power in the word, but with it we must know the Scriptures and the power of God. In the proper balancing of these two — in the study of Scripture on the one hand & in the adequate contemplation of God's power on the other — we shall find the best preservative against the errors of our age; & so we may await the hour when He will vindicate Himself, "What He hath promised, He is able also to perform."

F. B. Meyer.

Regent's Park Chapel,
Park Square East,
London, W.

For Rev. F. B. Meyer's wonderful plea for the use of the Bible.
"The Inexhaustable Riches of the Bible." See Page 529.

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The Power-House of the Church.

By Rev. F. B. Meyer, B. A., London, Eng.

We are losing greatly because we have allowed the Lord's conception of the church to elude us and fall into disuse. The church was His creation. It is his representative and organ on earth. Wherever two or three are gathered in His name, He is in the midst; and that handful plus the Master makes a church. The gathered souls may be very humble, poor and unlearned, but their recognition of His name, i. e. of His Kingdom and Glory, is enough to redeem their meeting from insignificance; and His Presence gives it a binding and loosing power which is instantly admitted as valid by the angels. What they bind in that lowly meeting is bound in Heaven and what they loose is loosed there.

These same solemn sanctities apply to the effect of our public prayers, in our ordinary services. The congregation should be reminded, before the minister says, "Let us Pray," that they have now come to the most important part of the service; and one to which every member should contribute something; just as every little bullet in the pan, contributes to the aggregate weight, which pulls down the opposite scale.

For this purpose, it is well for the minister to announce, before he begins to pray, the various topics for which public prayer is desired. In one case of which I know, quite a sheaf of letters and suggestions is received before the minister enters the pulpit, that the Church may bear them before God. In my judgment, most ministers pray too quickly, and do not give their people time enough to appropriate and endorse their utterances.

As it seems to me, ministers would do well, after uttering a few well-chosen words on a given topic, to wait whilst congregation has a brief opportunity of adopting his petitions, each for himself and herself. Intercessory prayer of this kind, backed by the faith which realizes that God is and that He is the Rewarder of those who diligently seek Him, is probably one of the mightiest forces in earth or heaven.

These remarks are specially applicable to the Church Prayer Meeting. This is the Power-House of the Church, and ought to be occupied with doing definite business with God. The more definite

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the requests the better. Indeed it is a good plan adopted by some ministers, to write out a number of subjects for prayer, and to give on a slip of paper one of these subjects to be prayed for at the approaching meeting, to some selected brother or sister. This plan obviates a pause of awkward silence; it concentrates thought on a given theme; and obviates long prayers, because when the friend had discharged his commission, he would resume his seat.

It is well also to keep a Prayer Record with a list of the subjects presented before God on a given date; with space either beneath the entry or on the other side of the page, for the further record of the date when the answer was given. In this way certain subjects would come up for repeated intercession until the happy moment when Prayer was merged in Praise.

The numbers that attend the Church Prayer Meeting may not be large; but quantity here is not so material as quality; and where the quality is high the quantity will follow. But the patient and regular attendance of pastor and officers is imperative. Nothing should be allowed to interfere with the regular holding of the weekly Prayer Meeting.

The exposition of the Bible, or a Bible-Talk, unfolding some of the rare treasures of Scripture might have a place in these sacred times; but the people should not be brought together primarily to hear the minister, but to meet with God. That should be the prime attention. There is no harm, however, in stirring up their pure minds, by a few words of Scripture exhortation, as a poker stirs a dead mass of coal into a flame.

There are many of the deeper passages of the Bible, which seem almost too precious and spiritual for an ordinary congregation. It is like reading love-letters on a race-course, to discuss them at the ordinary diet of Sunday worship; but we may reserve these for the sacred hour when the church gathers in the name of Jesus, to sing His most worthy praise, to hear His most holy Word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul.

Foreword.

Here is more material, more carefully selected, and more usable, for your prayer-meeting talks than you will find between any two covers.

No one need go home hungry when you have a larder like this to draw upon.

But—please remember one thing. This book should not be used as a refrigerator, from which you can pick out hastily a luncheon for those who come to you once a week spiritually hungry.

The food is here. Some of it is prepared, and it will serve for a lunch, or can be warmed over, but the book will not have attained its usefulness if you use it for that purpose alone.

Here is the material. Your part of the work in producing a successful prayer-meeting is to cook and serve the food.

To cook the food you need a fire. To kindle a fire you need fuel. Take your Bible and read first for yourself, and when you have gotten into communication with God, ask him to give you a vision of the real needs of the people. When the fire begins to warm your heart, then you can come to this book and select the thoughts you require. Cook them thoroughly—make them your own—improve them, apply them to the needs of your people and yourself.

There will be enough and some to spare.

When you have your own message you can copy these thoughts and give them to those present to read, making them fit into your message.

Beecher once asked Emerson if it were possible to tell what kind of grass the ox fed on from eating the meat. Emerson thought not. Beecher then acknowledged his indebtedness for much of his thought to Emerson. Beecher also said:

"I was a great reader of the old sermonizers. I read Robert South through and through. I formed much of my style and the handling of texts on his method. I obtained a vast amount of instruction and assistance from others, who were as familiar to me as my own name."

Yet he was considered one of the greatest and one of the most original speakers in America. God gave him and other great men great thoughts and great messages, but all their thoughts and messages were not great. God will give you great thoughts, but you have not time to hear all the great thoughts that God has given to all the great men.

And nothing will so enrich your mind and enable you to generate thoughts for the need of men as reading and familiarizing yourself with the thoughts of other men.

The man who can think great thoughts for himself is not ashamed to use thoughts of other men.

The credit will fit in naturally, and when not used literally or when used as a foundation for your own words, no credit is needed.

If this book enables you to satisfy the hunger of your members at the mid-week meeting, I shall be satisfied. If those who come are served with cream instead of skim milk, they will be satisfied.

Here is the material, here is the food, cook it. I can't build your fire for you. You must do that for yourself.

Sincerely,

FREDERICK BARTON.

Notes.

As the services are merely numbered and not dated the series can be entered upon at any time of the year, and corresponding number of the series.

* * *

The only services specially appropriate to certain dates are I (New Year); XXVI (Independence Day); XLVI (Thanksgiving); LI (Christmas) and LII (The Year's End). When necessary adjustment can be made by exchange with topics preceding or following.

* * *

If preferred, the suggestions and illustrations can be used with equal advantage in a year's series of sermons.

* * *

Wherever it has been possible to identify them, the author or origin of the "thought" or "illustration" has been given. In some cases, because they were fugitive clippings, this has been impossible.

Topics For a Year

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19. The Cross as Love's Necessity.—Matt. 27:42.....143
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40. Our Sympathizing Saviour.—Heb. 2:18· 4:15.....267
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44. Christian Zeal.—Titus 2:14.....287
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49. Cheerful Christians.—Matt. 14:27.....319
50. Our Words.—James 3:13.....325
51. God's Unspeakable Gift.—Luke 2:11.....331
52. Light at Eventide.—Zech. 14:6, 7.....339

One Hundred Suggestions.

Under reasonably favorable conditions **the pastor who is willing to pay the price** can have a well-attended, interesting, inspiring Prayer Meeting.

* * *

First of all it is a question of **personal estimate.** The service will assuredly deteriorate if the pastor esteems it of secondary importance. No elaboration of plans; no reiteration of pulpit emphasis; no appeals, threats, rebukes, or warnings will succeed in counteracting the blighting influence of his failure to realize its supreme importance as a factor in the religious life of the congregation.

For that matter, all pulpit pleas on its behalf merely weaken its prestige and gain no real or permanent good results. Unless **interest** is aroused, except for a little group of faithful souls who will continue coming from force of habit or a sense of duty, the rank and file of the congregation will not be touched.

A pastor who cherishes a high estimate of its importance, and is willing to devote his best energies and his most fervent prayers to its development, can ordinarily arouse the interest which is essential to a truly successful prayer meeting.

* * *

His efforts must have a **psychological** as well as a spiritual trend. He must not only look earnestly to God, but he must also look intelligently at man. Just as truly as the successful advertiser must make a study of the mind of man and its processes and ways of working, must the pastor who would be successful, in the highest sense of that word, do so. If he really desires to accomplish the greatest results in securing the salvation of human nature, he must know human nature and adapt his methods to its idiosyncrasies. Relying on the Spirit's guidance and power, the gaining of the desired result, is largely a **question of wise approach.**

* * *

There are largely attended prayer meetings which prove a mighty force for good in congregational life. They are not the outcome of chance. Other things being equal they may usually

be traced to a happy blending of the spiritual and psychological elements. Put in the form of a syllogism, the philosophy of their experience would read something like this:

Men will follow the leadings of awakened interest.
The prayer meeting can be made to appeal to this interest.
When it does they will attend it.

* * *

It is hardly necessary to say that the numerical and location limitations of a congregation will determine inevitably the limitations. A congregation of two hundred cannot expect to muster as large a prayer meeting as one of a thousand members might. A scattered rural congregation must adopt a prayer meeting standard differing from that of a compact town or city church. But, when once a reasonable standard of attendance has been determined, the pastor who is able and willing to pay the price can make his prayer meeting approximate that standard.

* * *

Assuming that there will be prayerful and most thorough preparation on the pastor's part, there are **certain accessories** which, while secondary, are essential to securing the best results.

* * *

In starting in upon the revolutionizing of your prayer meeting, in order to bring a sufficient number of people most quickly into touch with your plans, it is sometimes well to secure a list of signers for a **six weeks' or three months' trial attendance pledge.** Without announcing your design, get them started and then make the services so interesting to them, so helpful, so full of social, spiritual light and life that they will continue after the pledge has expired. The writer has tested this plan with gratifying results.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS.

Because the spirit touches life through the body with its varied powers and capacities, it is of immense importance that we provide favorable physical conditions for spiritual activity. This has special application to the Prayer Meeting Room.

Make the Room Attractive.—Men will always be found in times of persecution who are willing to be martyrs for Christ. But those same men will lose all interest in the prayer service held amid inexcusably shabby and repellant appointments.

Money spent in making the prayer meeting room attractive is rigid economy and will yield not only rich spiritual, but solid financial returns.

Light Means Life.—A dingy room will prove fatal to the service. Well distributed illumination is inspiration.

* * *

Comfortable Seats.—One hundred inviting arm-chairs will tempt one hundred occupants, often fatigued by the day's work. Do not be afraid of putting the saints to sleep. People kept awake by discomfort make unresponsive auditors.

* * *

Thorough Ventilation.—Twenty people will devitalize the air of a prayer meeting room in five minutes. Unless you can arrange to renew it by draftless ventilation it would be better to recall the appointment. Deoxygenated air destroys spirituality and makes people posts.

* * *

Temperature.—Keep it ordinarily between 65 deg. and 70 deg. Neither perspiration nor chilliness promote inspiration. Provide fans in summer.

* * *

If at all possible have a room the dimensions of which conform to the requirements of a normal attendance. Too much waste space with its echoes and shadows is a hindrance.

* * *

Study the physical conditions thoroughly, appreciating their importance, and impart your intelligent appreciation of the essential character of these things to your janitor.

PRAYER.

Remember that the meeting is primarily a **Prayer** Meeting, and give prayer the first place.

* * *

Train Your People to Pray in their homes, in public, cordially, with avoidance of phrase-ruts, fervently. The writer knows of a congregation in which the pastor found six or eight people who could be depended upon for public prayer, but he left, on resigning some years later, seventy or eighty.

* * *

Urge the duty upon them privately. Begin by using the Lord's Prayer in concert, in groups, by twos, singly. Encourage them to begin with sentence prayers.

There is a little volume called **"Prayers of all Ages"** which will be suggestive if passed around.

* * *

Make your own public prayers examples. Let them be free and yet studied. Freshen your phraseology.

* * *

Invite requests for prayer for individuals and causes.

* * *

Help your people to enter into **the Bible teachings about prayer.**

* * *

Just as "voluntary deep breathing" is recommended for the promotion of physical health, so spiritual health and religious influence may be promoted by the **conscious systematic effort to improve your praying.**

* * *

Frequently cite cases of **answered prayer** from within and without the Bible. In the latter case, shun silliness.

* * *

Keep your people from forgetting that **songs are prayers.**

* *

ATMOSPHERE.

The spiritual **"atmosphere"** will have much to do with the impression made and the influence exerted by the service

* * *

Back of all else there must be dependence upon **the Holy Spirit** for this.

* * *

But, fully acknowledging this, it is still true that **the leader's personality** will largely determine it. He can depress and deaden or quicken and stimulate the others in attendance.

* * *

It is important that he come to the meeting in the best **physical tone** possible.

* * *

He should be **mentally alert.** He will not be apt to be so if he comes to it from a heavy meal. Abstemiousness is the price of mental alertness and the magnetism which goes with it.

* * *

Of course he must be **spiritually "fit,"** coming to it fresh from his closet, if he can arrange it.

As in all other cases where one man comes into special relation to an audience, there must be a certain degree of **masterfulness**—a determination by God's help to carry his audience with him. If he is merely passive, manifesting a weak spirit of indifference or timidity, he will go down in futile impotence for the unconscious speaker antagonism which possesses most audiences.

* * *

The speaker's manner—and his character behind that manner and expressing itself by it—will have as much to do with creating the atmosphere pervading the service as his words.

* * *

Throw your whole self with all your powers at their best, into that particular service, in a spirit of humble dependence upon God.

* * *

MUSIC.

Know your hymnal from cover to cover.

* * *

If possible, have **a good leader,** one who will train the people to sing effectively. Pay him, if necessary, at least until their training is completed.

* * *

Use a **hymnal** providing inspiring hymns, and do not change it frequently. The best hymns for your meeting are the hymns the people know "by heart." Be slow—very slow—to discard them.

* * *

Group a dozen singers informally about the organ or piano.

* * *

Ordinarily let the singing be **congregational.** If soloists are available who will put sentiment rather than self in the foreground, they may render real service occasionally, but anything savoring of the "concert" will spoil the spirit of the meeting.

* * *

Sometimes **read the hymns** in unison before—or instead of—singing them.

* * *

Give brief **illustrative incidents** concerning the hymns.

PRINTERS INK.

Issue Topic Cards.—Sunday's announcement of the topic is ordinarily forgotten. Give time and thought to making them attractive, alluring. The interrogative topic is frequently in place.

* * *

The Multigraph makes it easy and very inexpensive to prepare special printed matter. Money spent in this way or for printing is well invested.

* * *

Prepare printed or duplicated **Bible Readings** on the topic.

* * *

Pledge cards, promising a trial attendance of upon three months' meetings, have been used by the writer with excellent results.

* * *

Leaflets covering any theme which you wish to bring to the fore in the congregation's thinking ("Giving," "Prayer," "Soul-Winning," "Consecration," "Christian Activity," "Sanctified Social Service," etc.) may be procured for a few cents a hundred and distributed toward the close of the meeting.

* * *

Pastoral letters on the importance of the Prayer Meeting count.

* * *

Occasional programs of the meetings may be issued to advantage, printed or mimeographed.

* * *

Specially prepared responsive readings on some topic will add an attractive feature now and then.

* * *

A brief, strong, magnetic book on some subject connected with personal life or church activity, passed around among the members who consent to read it promptly and pass it on, will bring good results. It must be compact and full of living interest. Let those who read it enter their names, with date on which the book was completed, on a rear fly-leaf.

* * *

Use a clear type **hymnal,** well made.

* * *

Use **attractive** printed matter. Cheap and slovenly printing on poor paper will do more harm than good.

THE SCRIPTURES.

Keep the **Bible** to the fore.

* * *

Use **your own Bible**—an interleaved one, full of your own notes, catch-words, illustrations will prove a mine of riches.

* * *

Encourage your people to bring **their Bibles,** and mark them.

* * *

Call for references on the topic frequently. Quietly develop familiarity with the Bible by **reference hunts.**

* * *

Follow the lead of the **marginal references** in following up various topics.

* * *

Have individuals read the lesson and collateral passages.

* * *

Vary this method by having twos, threes, groups, sections, all read.

* * *

Sometimes **devote a whole evening to reading verses** of special beauty and helpfulness.

* * *

LEADERSHIP.

Lead the meeting yourself.

* * *

Secure **others**—competent ones—as leaders.

* * *

Occasionally bring in strong **leaders from outside** the congregation.

* * *

Give occasional evenings into the charge of your **organizations**: Missionary Society, Official Board, Sunday School, Men's Organization, Young People's Society.

* * *

Ordinarily **keep in close touch with the leaders,** meeting with them beforehand to prepare the general program outline.

* * *

Give time, care, prayer to **developing leaders.**

* * *

Do not underestimate the possibilities latent in the laymen and laywomen of your congregation. Remember your own "first prayers" and public talks.

GENERAL PARTICIPATION.

The securing of general participation is the result of **persistent and systematic effort.**

* * *

Use **pastoral visitation** and personal interviews to win consent.

* * *

Begin with the **easier ways.**

* * *

Ask individuals to read Bible verses; to read references; passages from books; verses of a hymn.

* * *

Get them to re-tell some illustration of the topic, provided for them, in their own words.

* * *

Sentence prayers, prayers repeated by groups and sections, or by all, after the pastor, sentence by sentence; the Lord's Prayer; the Twenty-Third Psalm; Bible prayers read; will all lead up to courage and confidence for offering prayers of their own.

* * *

A fervent service, with those present aroused and deeply interested, will inspire them with willingness to pray and speak.

* * *

COMMITTEES.

Enlisting co-operation in preparing for and conducting the meeting will deepen interest and secure increased attendance.

* * *

A **Welcome and Room Committee** can render valuable service by greeting attendants and making the room attractive and inviting.

* * *

A **Program Committee,** working in conjunction with the pastor, can arrange for special services and special features at the regular services.

* * *

A **Music Committee** may be of special use.

* * *

A **Participation Committee** can prepare, and seek constantly to add to, a list of those willing to take part.

An **Attendance Committee** can swell the number present by verbal and written invitations and bulletin boards.

* * *

SENTIMENT MOULDING.

Do not fail to realize the importance of the opportunity which the intimate and special fellowship of the Prayer Meeting provides for **moulding the sentiment of your people** on important subjects.

* * *

Several meetings devoted to the various phases of the question of "Christian Stewardship" ought to definitely increase the giving of the congregation.

* * *

This same thing is true of **"Home Missions."**

* * *

And of **"Foreign Missions."**

* * *

And of **"Temperance"** and other **"Reform"** topics.

* * *

If you encourage the **informal method of conversational discussion,** you can often meet difficulties, objections, unfamiliarity with the questions far better than by sermons.

* * *

MISCELLANEOUS POINTS.

Avoid **long prayers** and talks.

* * *

The use of a blackboard for giving diagrams of Bible book-studies increased the attendance of one Prayer Meeting of which the writer knows to over three hundred.

* * *

A list of topics made up from **topics or queries handed in** by the members will add to the interest.

* * *

Emphasize special days in services nearest to those days: Christmas, Thanksgiving, New Year, Decoration Day, Independence Day, Easter, Labor Day, Washington and Lincoln's Birthdays, etc., etc.

* * *

Lay stress on social fellowship before and after the meeting.

Encourage new members to begin attending at once and arrange with others to show them kindly attention.

* * *

Have special services for the various branches of your church work: The Sunday School, The Young People's Work, the Missionary Society, etc.

* * *

Give special care to the **selection of topics,** considering **local needs.**

* * *

Better run the risk of offending a "bore" than sacrifice the whole service to over-consideration for him or her.

* * *

The occasional use of the stereopticon will aid in providing variety and stimulating interest.

* * *

A box for requests for prayer will often give definiteness and the human touch to the meeting.

* * *

Remember that, under God's blessing, **you will get out of the Prayer Meeting what you put into it.**

General Preparation.

W. A. Laughlin, Ph. D., Franklinville, N. Y.

"The world, the flesh and the devil"—a triumvirate of its sworn enemies are constantly crying—"The prayer-meeting must be destroyed or religion will live in Christian hearts." The vital question is to make a successful prayer-meeting.

Success comes when the prayer-meeting is "the people's meeting," not overled or underled. What is needed is variety, vivacity, brevity and enthusiasm, with no "lost time—the devil's interlude." Let it be a "say so" prayer-meeting. "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." Psa. 107:2. Success in the prayer meeting is not an accident. There is something to be done. "Not what I have but what I do!" cries the Sage of Chelsea to us. Poets may be "born, not made," but people and prayer-meetings become good by resistance, by effort. Lay hold on God, new methods.

General preparations are never to be omitted, a nice typewritten letter sent through the mail addressed to all "retired" Christians, and tired Christians, too, urging their attendance. I do this at regular intervals. I request them "to bring one and count two." I allot some work adapted to the person selected. I called on chronic excuse makers at their excuse factory and won out in bad chronic cases by calling eleven times for eleven consecutive weeks. I also advertised "cheap trips to prayer meetings." A flag with a white elephant on it, sometimes floated prayer meeting day and underneath it, "Help us get rid of him" —of course they knew what it meant.

We follow no routine method of opening, sometimes a quartette, guitar or mandolin music, sometimes sentence prayers. Bibles are always necessary. The blackboard is essential. The subject is announced a week in advance. Study is urged upon the topic, which is often announced in a novel, catchy way.

I. Stories. "When the world was Young."—Genesis.
"A Romance of the Olden Time."—Ruth.
"An Angel of Clay."—Esther.

II. Travels, "Little Journeys with Jesus."—Matt. 15:21; Luke 7:11.
"Journey with Paul."—Acts 13.

III. Poetry. "In Memoriam."—II Sam. 1:19-27.
"Springtime's Nature Poem."—Psa. 104.

IV. Sermons. "The Swan Song."—Deut. 5:11.
"Sermon on Mount."—Matt. 5:7.

The very best printing is used on announcement cards distributed with subjects for each month, each announcement card being illustrated by a thumb nail cut, e. g., "Christ among the doctors." The card given below is used as an invitation, and at the bottom a question is written, duly numbered, with a preference attached. This card is brought with the Bible to prayer meeting, and certainly has accomplished marvels, but this is all "before" the meeting. "After"—what? "Ah, there's the rub!" Greet all heartily, strangers first, friends afterwards.

Our Mid-week Meeting.

That the week-night service may be interesting—appetizing and nourishing—careful attention is given to the selection of themes, and then a few persons are asked each week to specially prepare for the service.

Will you kindly speak briefly on the following thought or passage in the prayer meeting this week, greatly assisting and obliging,

Your Pastor.

Prophecy and Promise.

Matt. 18:19, 20.

Dear Friend:—I am writing this letter with the object in view of enlisting more and more of our people in the support of the prayer meeting. These meetings are wonderfully helpful. Here we gather, young and old, as a family, and enjoy a season of real fellowship and prayer. You will find it well worth your while to give the prayer meeting a place in your list of regular engagements.

Come next Wednesday evening (7:30 to 8:30) expecting a blessing. Bring a Bible with you.

Yours in the Master's work,

(Pastor's Signature.)

STUDY OF THE WORD.

George L. Petrie, Pastor Presbyterian Church,

It was Barton's "Little Bible" that gave an impulse to our church prayer meeting. Our membership was about 400. Our prayer meeting attendance was about thirty. There was little life and power. I purchased 100 "Little Bibles" containing twelve great chapters of the Bible. Before distributing them, I

requested those present to bring, the next Wednesday evening, lists of what they regarded twelve great chapters of the Bible. There was at once an increased interest. At the next meeting there were fifty persons present. Thirty-five lists were handed in. Many chapters were mentioned. All of them were entitled to be called great. There was a deep interest manifested. I then distributed the "Little Bibles."

This gave me a new idea, and I put it to use. We began the study of Philippians. As the first topic, I offered this question: "What reasons might the Philippians have for expecting a letter from Paul?" All were asked to bring papers on the subject. The papers were extremely interesting and the reasons given were such as these: Paul founded that church; a prisoner, he had leisure to write; he had written to other churches; he had received a gift and a messenger from them. About seventy persons were present. By topics we studied the whole epistle. The pastor always spoke on the topic of the evening. The attendance eagerly listened to note which of their thoughts found a place in the pastor's remarks, and which of their difficulties were discussed by him. At the conclusion of the Philippians study the attendance was about 100.

So we studied Leviticus: by topics, with papers by the people, and remarks by the pastor. The general testimony was that a new book had been added to the Bible; a book hitherto regarded uninteresting, was a charming series of pictures of Christ.

Naturally we undertook Hebrews next. One of the most interesting topics in Hebrews was: "Which is the greatest faith hero mentioned in the eleventh chapter?" This gave a very animated meeting.

We have studied Ephesians in the same way. Now we are studying the Cities of Refuge, one at a time.

Results:—

The pastor is learning what the people know.
Attendance increased from thirty to one hundred.
Deep interest in the word of God.
Life and power in the meeting.
Fervor and enlargement in prayer.
Intenser spirituality.
Co-operation of some who are "shut in," but send papers.
Bright, cheerful, helfpul service.

A meeting that people come to, because they would not like to miss it.

Everybody comes with expectation of a good time.

New faces are appearing in the meeting.

We do not advertise the meeting. It advertises itself. It is profitable. Therefore, people come to it.

It is a great success in numbers, interest and power. The reasons of its success, I believe, are co-operation of the attendants, closer and larger contact with the Word, and the prominent devotional feature of the meeting.

Instead of difficulty in finding suitable topics for prayer meeting talks, I fear I shall not live long enough to undertake all the subjects which now press on me for our Wednesday evening studies.

1. The meeting advertises itself.

2. The members do not have to be induced to come and take part. Many come and enjoy the meeting and many are glad to take part because of the pleasure and profit. There is no urging. Men, women and children come and take part.

LAY LEADERS.

W. A. Shaw, Pastor First Congregational Church,

I worked hard for six months to get my men interested.

I had reached a point where I had twenty and thirty men each night.

I had begun announcing that Brother So-and-So would lead next night. The interest grew until I have a prayer meeting that has grown from twenty in all to seventy and as high as one hundred.

Some who lead are Sunday School teachers. One man I mention as a sample, brought his class one night, twenty girls about twelve years of age. The subject was cared for by the girls reading scripture in keeping with his talk, a chorus, one instrumental selection, and many prayers. This was a wonderful meeting.

Now, the speaker must come to hear himself and is ashamed not to come when the next man's turn comes. Then, again, men study to be able to measure up to the other leaders. It certainly is a wonderful way to work our men. The women follow, as their husbands are the leaders.

Outsiders come to hear the man who works beside them.

I know of no plan to lead men like this one.

CHURCH SOCIETIES IN PRAYER MEETING.

James A. Hensey, Pastor M. E. Church.

My plan is the co-operative prayer meeting. The presidents of all the societies in the church—it is a church of nearly one thousand members—were called in council and the plan laid before them. Their hearty assent and promise of cordial co-operation was received. Each society must take its turn in attending the prayer meeting in a body. It assembles in another part of the building a few minutes before the regular hour of worship; marches into the prayer room in a body; occupies reserved seats, the officers sitting to the right and left of the pastor within the altar.

A systematic, determined effort is made to get out the members of the societies—all of them. A clear, emphatic announcement is put in the Bulletin; postal cards are sent to all the members the day before, and each member who has a 'phone receives a reminder not more than five hours before the time of meeting. (Each president keeps an accurate 'phone list, and divides the names for such work.

We have enough societies to last just two months. Then we begin over again. Each society tries to outdo its former record. Interest constantly increases. The societies follow this order: Ladies' Aid Society; Sunday School; Woman's Foreign Missionary Society; Oxford Bible Class for Men, a Sunday School class numbering 160 members; Woman's Home Missionary Society; King's Daughters, seven circles; Epworth League; Standard Bearers, Home Guards, Cadets of Temperance; the Official Board; the Choir. The choir numbers fifty voices.

Results.

1. An increase in attendance of at least 75 per cent. Increase permanent.

2. It gives the prayer meeting special emphasis and a special program for each week. Does away with necessity for bellicose and effectless exhortations to maintain the mid-week service.

3. Increases the esprit de corps of every society. Makes the presidents know their members. Stirs up many who had nothing to do with the societies except pay the annual dues. Strengthens the societies as well as prayer meeting.

4. Gives the officers of the societies public and merited recognition, and thus increases their efficiency.

BLACKBOARD ADVERTISING.

L. J. Ballard, Pastor M. E. Church, South,

When a prayer service closes I begin to publish the next. A blackboard is one of the best helps. I place it with my subject and any other information I need, in the Sunday School room, calling attention to the same before the Sunday School. I carry this board to the auditorium and call attention to it both Sunday morning and Sunday night. In my pastoral visits during the week, I remind them of the prayer service, giving the subject upon which I will speak, and in my prayers with them I pray for the prayer meeting.

So much for the advertising. Be sure to hold the prayer meeting in the regular church auditorium. People are quick to detect a lack of faith in the minister. They will see at once you do not expect much if you hold in a small room. Possibly the most important point is begin on time. Put this in red ink in your announcement and be sure, whatever you do, to begin right on the minute. If my church organist or pianist can not be at prayer meeting regularly I get one who can. I use as much care in the selection of music for the prayer meeting as I do for the Sunday night service. Not too many new hymns. Sing about two stanzas of each hymn selected. Don't sing too much. Short talks from the leader, short prayers, short testimonies from a few. Call penitents occasionally. People like to go where things are happening. Pray for the strangers present. Dismiss the congregation occasionally, while they are kneeling. Vary the order of service as often as possible. Close as promptly as you begin, I never hold over one hour. Close in less than an hour if the service lags the least. Keep your fingers on its pulse. See that it has plenty of life all the time.

Caution. See that your room is well lighted, well ventilated and, if cold weather, it must be warm. When making the announcements Sunday morning and Sunday night, be sure to make a brief report as to the meeting the previous night. If conversions, report them.

The method above reported has given as large crowds at my prayer meeting as attend on Sunday night. I believe it will give the same result at any church.

HOW A DEAD PRAYER MEETING WAS RESURRECTED.

Rev. Thomas C. Richards, of Warren, Mass., tells in the Congregationalist, how he is resurrecting a dead prayer meeting. There is no patent on the idea. Any pastor who works it will probably obtain the same results. Cards bearing the following pledge were circulated:

"I hereby promise to attend the Thursday evening meetings of the First Congregational Church of Warren, Mass., at least twelve times during the year, unless prevented by circumstances which make it impossible.

"This promise is not binding unless one hundred similar pledges are secured within thirty days."

Name.....

"One hundred and twenty were signed in the specified time.

"The senior deacon remarked that our work had just begun. The next step was to get something worth coming to.

"We name it on the calendar, The Midweek Service. Our general theme has been The Teachings of Jesus. During the Week of Prayer we took up the fundamentals of his teaching, The Kingdom, God Himself, and Man.

"There has been variety in the form of the service. One week we had a Bible study on Jesus' Teaching as to Prayer. The next week we took up The Model Prayer. Three schoolteachers summarized part of J. R. Miller's The Golden Gate of Prayer. Each phrase of the prayer was interpreted by the best poetry, and finally many prayed, 'Lord, teach me to pray.' Once a month some layman from a neighboring town speaks fifteen minutes on the theme from a practical standpoint. When the topic was Righteousness, the president of the Ware Bank spoke on Righteousness in the Business World. The next month the secretary of the West Brookfield Farmers' Club spoke on The Teachings of Jesus and the Farmer.

"We use the best books on the teachings of Jesus. Sometimes extracts are read, sometimes part in one's own words. There is much more preparation made than formerly, though spontaneous word and prayer are not omitted. Nearly every night there is special music, not in anthem form, but more of the heart songs.

"The people come now because they want to, not as a duty. The problem has become a pleasure. It is not solved, but is in solution."

THE RESURRECTION OF A PRAYER MEETING.

Rev. Maurice Grigs, Paw Paw, Mich.

My prayer-meeting was dying. What was the wise thing to do? Have a funeral service. In place of the usual notice of the prayer-meeting, the congregation sat up Sunday morning when I read the following from the pulpit:

"The funeral services of the late Mrs. Prayer-Meeting will be held in the church parlors on Thursday evening at 7:30 P. M. The doctor examined her pulse last Thursday and could hardly find it. Cause of death, heart disease and lack of exercise. Special notice: The elders are requested to act as pallbearers."

Some smiled. One lady, a little deaf, asked her neighbor, "Who is dead? I did not quite catch the name."

There was a good attendance on Thursday evening. They wondered what was up. I followed the funeral idea through the service. I read the account of the death of Dorcas and spoke from the words, "This woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did." (Acts 9:36-43.)

I tried to show what a blessing Mrs. Prayer-Meeting had been all these years to the church: her labors of love, the part she played in building up the church, in the formation of character, etc.

We did not bury Mrs. Prayer-Meeting. She came back to life. The attendance has increased one hundred per cent. I am going to announce a funeral every time Mrs. Prayer-Meeting dies. Try a funeral for your prayer-meeting.

Some Faults With the Prayer-Meeting.

1. Pastors, themselves, frequently do not prepare for it. They expect it to go without exerting much energy.

2. Church members who attend as a rule come unprepared. Sometimes they do not even know what the subject is.

3. The pastor usually talks first and uses up all the ideas and the good people are unable to take part without repeating what has been said, and this they hesitate to do.

4. Sometimes members talk too long and pray too long.

Conclusions.

1. Let the pastor plan for the prayer-meeting several days ahead. After the theme is chosen write notes to or in some way see various members, and outline some special work for them to do at the next meeting.

HELPFUL THOUGHTS ON THE PRAYER MEETING.

A prayer-meeting is neither a success nor failure because of numbers. We may figure a service a success when the greatest amount of good has been received by those attending. The study of a prayer-meeting will be not how to get an attendance, but rather how to help those who do attend. An attendance is assured when it is made of that helpful nature that it pays to attend. People are attending not as much from a sense of duty as from a realization of need and having the need met.

The record of the service will spread in accordance with the meaning of the service to people. This is the substance of my thought in planning for my mid-week service.

Such a thought places a demand upon the leader for work, thought and preparation. My most satisfactory service has been the one into which I put the most work, thought and prayer. Many of our prayer-meetings are too human. They need to be prayer made meetings.

The service that is to be helpful is the one that God can direct and plan. It may be that a prayer-meeting not so much from the amount of prayer at the service as that it is a service, the result of prayer. Perhaps the amount of prayer at the service will increase if the service is born of prayer.

Prayer for anything brings a responsibility for that thing. I seek to make that a success that I have prayed for. There are a few things that to me seem absolutely essential in making a satisfactory service.

First, a topic that has to do with local conditions. A series of topics prepared in Boston or Chicago do not meet the needs of my church. An acquaintance with the people will help in determining the topic. A topic clear, plain, simple, that has to do with life, is necessary.

Second—Work. No prayer-meeting will be a success when our whole thought is planned after we reach the church.

Third—A conversational spirit. I try to have a homelike service where people will feel free to ask questions, speak, leave suggestions, etc., with the feeling that we are friends together.

Fourth—Aim to help people. People need it; they come to receive it. It is my business to see that it is supplied. My services are taking more of the nature of a mid-week conference upon life. Plain heart talks are given, questions are answered and help received. My satisfaction has come from the fact that people are helped.—W. A. Leary

IMPROVING THE PRAYER MEETING—A PROGRAM MEETING.

An outline of the plan followed most of the time for several years may seem worthy of a place in this book.

A program something like the following is hectographed and sent to all who presumably are able to attend, and often to many others, and, with some topics, to every family in the parish. (Parts are numbered for convenience of reference below:)

1. Singing.
2. Memory Verses (Scripture or Hymn).
3. Interval for Prayers.
4. Singing.
5. Echoes from Sabbath Services.
6. Current Events.
7. Singing.
8. Hand-book Topic.
9. Interval for Prayers.
10. Closing Song.

The aim in No. 2 is to deepen the devotional spirit. No. 5 has often called out wholesome suggestion, comfort, criticism, appreciation. No. 6 has proved a most interesting and helpful element. Of course the aim has been to get at the bearing of current events on the progress of the kingdom, or vice versa. This encourages the study of events principle-wise. Usually parts are voluntary. For variety some one is asked beforehand, when the program is distributed, to say a word on a topic of special interest, and is furnished the material, if needed.

For No. 8 is sacredly reserved the last half hour of the meeting. Special parts are usually assigned, a few questions asked, clippings distributed, etc., all beforehand. At the meeting the conversational method is in vogue, with free use of question and answer, with effort to secure spontaneity. The pastor takes but five minutes in introducing the topic, and follows up at the close if necessary.

The programs are distributed at church or Sunday School, or more frequently by a messenger committee of the Boy's Club at the homes, or by pastoral visits. Some are mailed. This plan has been more successful in attendance and interest than any other method I have used. It has a charm for outsiders. It adds very appreciably to the stationery bills, and requires considerable extra work, but it pays.—E. L. Morse.

A PRAYER MEETING PLAN.

E. E. Mack, Church of Christ.

When we came here a couple of years ago we were told that it was no use to expect more than just a handful at the mid-week service; but we have had an average attendance at our prayer-meetings of from 40 to 50 right through the year with all sorts of counter attractions.

From the beginning we planned that no two meetings should be just the same and with that end in view I sat down and planned a schedule covering many months of the year, with every meeting beginning a little differently and being conducted along different lines and possibly closing not just like all the others.

Our meetings began to be the talk of our little city, because of their interest and spiritual power.

We have no very talented people among those that attend; the fact that every single one of the reasons suggested in the enclosed slip was discussed, and that ably by some, speaks well for the plan.

Each one present was given one of the lists, and asked to discuss one of the reasons given for being a Christian of influence.

The lists were copied on my typewriter by using carbon paper.

I am inclined to believe that if our preachers would give the same thought to planning the prayer-meeting that they do to the other services we would not hear so much about the meeting being a dead service.

Following is a slip for a recent service:

Please look over this list of reasons why Christians should be careful of their influence, very carefully.

Choose one of the reasons given, and discuss it in your own words.

Remember that if this meting is to be a good one that you must help. Can we depend on you doing your part?

Question.

Why should Christians be careful of their influence?

1. Because the world is watching our every act.
2. Because each one has some influence either for good or evil.
3. Because each one must give an account for his influence.

4. Because the devil uses our evil actions to help his own work and to harm the cause of Christ.

5. Because there is no better way to help Christ win the world to himself.

6. Because our good works will be the cause of many glorifying our heavenly Father.

7. Because we cannot be good Christians unless our influence over others is for good.

8. Because the Bible tells us that we are to walk circumspectly as Christians.

9. Because we are said to reflect Christ as in an open glass; can we do this if our influence is bad?

10. Because the Scripture tells us that we are to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we have been called.

11. Because the world judges the Bible and the cause of Christ by what it sees in us.

12. Because our influence, if it is good, will make it easier for every consecrated Christian to be a better one.

13. Because our influence, if it is bad, will make it more difficult for the weak brother to live right.

4. Because we are to be held responsible for our influence over others.

15. Because the influence of our lives is to go on after we are gone (for their works do follow).

PRAYER MEETING RECORD BOOK.

We have recently heard of a church that keeps a prayer-meeting record book. The idea is unique. The names of the people are written in and a careful record of their attendance kept. Once a month a list of those who were present at all the prayer-meeting services during the preceding month is published in the church paper. No doubt this stimulates the attendance considerably.

THOUGHTS OF OTHERS.

H. W. Michener, Pastor M. E. Church,

I believe that the best plan I have found in a number of years is to take one of the sermons found in The Expositor, and form notes from it and talks from that. I tell the people what I am doing and that I do it to bring to them the thoughts of various preachers all over the country. By preparing carefully for the meeting and keeping enthusiastic, this plan works well. One must change plans once in a while with the changing moods and seasons, but of the various plans, this is always the best.

PRAYER MEETING PLAN.

The middle of September I obtained from F. M. Barton one hundred copies of the tract called "The Little Bible," which contains twelve choice chapters of the Bible. These I distributed, in person, leaving one in each home and explaining that the chapters would be taken up as the prayer-meeting lesson each Wednesday night during the following twelve weeks.

Then I carefully prepared a list of questions on the chapters and made mimeograph copies for each family. These lists were taken out each Monday either by myself or Junior League. The list in each case, of course, was for the Wednesday night following. In the service I had the questions on a blackboard and conducted the discussion as informally as possible. It has taken much work, but the method has wonderfully stimulated the interest in the prayer-meeting service. The results are an abundant reward. —Granville M. Calhoun, Pastor M. E. Church, Toledo, Ill.

A NOVEL SURPRISE PARTY.

In order to secure increased attendance at the mid-week prayer-meetings, a C. E. Society of Englewood, Ill., adopted a very practical and yet rather novel plan. Unknown to the pastor they secured the names and addresses of a large number of church members who did not ordinarily attend the weekly prayer-meeting of the church. To these they sent invitations, asking them to rally on a given Wednesday evening to surprise the pastor by having the largest prayer-meeting on record. The invitation stated that the meeting would be entirely spiritual, no social feature being connected with it. When the night came the Endeavorers were a little fearful for the success of their plans for the temperature was the lowest of the winter. Nevertheless the attendance was more than twice its usual size. You may imagine the pastor's surprise as member after member came in, some of them for the first time in years. Instead of a meeting of one hour's duration with much of the time wasted in chilly silence, this meeting lasted an hour and a half every moment of it fully occupied. At the close of the meeting the pastor was shown a copy of the invitation that was responsible for the unusual attendance. He said, "I knew something was up, but could not figure out just what it was." Then he added with emphasis. "That is the kind of a surprise party I like." One of the church members remarked, "It was the best meeting we ever held in the church." The Young People's Society was responsible for it.—C. E. World.

SERVICE I.

The New Year's Opportunities and Obligations.

Romans 12:1.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Lesson:—Romans 12.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. The New Year will be **what, by God's grace, we make it.**
2. **The mightiest influence for shaping it aright** is the **unreserved surrender** of the life to Christ.
3. This is our glorious **opportunity**; our solemn **obligation,** confronting us at the opening of the year.
4. It means the consecration of **the whole man,** including the intellect, the emotions, the will; all the powers of the mind and body.
5. The controlling motive is **gratitude**; the remembrance of God's mercies.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

The Way. (1)—This is the first of a new year. We are setting out on a journey of which we can have no knowledge in advance. The road is one on which we never have gone heretofore. We know not what any day will have for us, what our duties will be, what burdens shall be laid upon us, what sorrows we shall have to endure, what battles we shall have to fight. We cannot see one step before us. How can we know the way? As we sit in the quiet, this first evening, and ask the question, we hear an answer which is full of comfort, Jesus says to us, "I am the way." All we shall have to do, therefore, will be to stay with Christ. He has made a way through the world for us. He has gone over all the journey and opened a road for us at great cost. He went over the way himself—we shall find his shoe-prints at every step. He has a definite way for each one of us. "Every mile of the journey he has chosen, and every place where I pitch my tent he has selected for me."—Rev. J. R. Miller.

Heaven. (2)—There are but three steps to heaven—out of self, into Christ, into glory.—Rowland Hill.

One by One. (3)—If every year we would root out one vice we should sooner before perfect men.—Thomas à Kempis.

Not Your Own. (4)—Never say: "It is nobody's business but my own what I do with my life." It is not true. Your life is put in your hands as a trust, for many others beside yourself. If you use it well, it will make many others happy; if you abuse it, it will harm many others beside yourself.—James M. Pullman.

Regrets. (5)—"Regrets are a waste of time in every possible instance except one. That one is the instance in which the soul entertains them thoughtfully and humbly until they become valuable lessons for the future. Then they are no waste, but a true personal gain for the coming years."

Free Will. (6)—The essential element in consecration is its spontaneity. It is true that God's claims on us are absolute. He demands, with perfect justice, our yielding of ourselves, but he cannot force us, nor would he. It is true that our consecration is the avenue of all that is best in life—the highest possibility of our nature, our greatest happiness and largest usefulness among men, but the real motive of our consecration cannot be based on these. "The mercies of God," multiplied as they are, but finding a climax in our personal knowledge and appropriation of Christ, who gave himself for us, is the inspiring motive alone for our presentation of ourselves; a far different thing from the reluctant surrender which the rebel sinner makes in his abandonment of sin and the acceptance of Christ. We never truly give ourselves to Christ until experimentally we know he has given himself to us. Instinctively the call comes at once to every truly converted soul to make this consecration, and not before. The text, "Thy people shall be made willing in the day of Thy power," is misleading, and is contrary both to revelation and the philosophy of the case. The literal meaning is: "Thy people shall be free-will offerings in the day of Thy power." And such are demanded and such is the response, in the day of Christ's power, as manifested in every believing heart.

The surrender of our entire being, with all its conditions, relations and possibilities, is included.—Stephan.

Pay the Price. (7)—A deep enthusiasm for religion, a passion for piety is far from common. Not many are willing to pay the price of supreme excellence; they will not take the enormous pains that are requisite. It is not a matter that can be done on the jump, and finished at a spurt, or very much

hurried. Emotional crises—blessings, baptisms, outpourings—have their place, they are to be watched for and welcomed as important helps, but he who depends upon them and trusts in them as the chief essential will fall far short. There must be constant enlargement of the ideal, and then a progressive realization of the ideal thus formed. Only by careful, persevering, painstaking examination and study can we reach a definite comprehension of just what Christ would do were he here in our place today. We must transpose the melody of his life into the key of our own times without impairing its beauty. Our task is not the copying of a pattern but the infusion of a spirit, which is much more difficult.—"The Riches of His Grace."

Evidence of Salvation. (8)—The consecrated believer rejoices that he is saved. He glories in his Saviour and in the completeness of his salvation; but he never forgets that he is "saved to serve." Indeed, the strength of his desire that others should be blessed is a measure of the blessing he has himself received. His eagerness to make known the love of God to others is an index of the measure in which the love of God has been shed abroad in his own heart. The consecration of the man who makes no effort for the salvation of the lost is spurious, and his joy and peace, if he have any at all, cannot be other than ephemeral.—Campbell Morgan.

The Glory of the New Year (9).

From glory unto glory!
Be this our joyous song;
As on the King's own highway,
We bravely march along.
From glory unto glory!
O word of stirring cheer,
As dawns the solemn brightness of
Another glad New Year.

The fullness of His blessing
Encompasseth our way;
The fullness of His promises
Crowns every brightening day;
The fullness of His glory
Is beaming from above,
While more and more we learn to know
The fullness of His love.

And closer yet and closer
The golden bonds shall be,
Uniting all who love our Lord
In pure sincerity;
And wider yet and wider
Shall the circling glory glow,
As more and more are taught of God
That mighty love to know.

O let our adoration
For all that He hath done,
Peal out beyond the stars of God,
While voice and life are one;
And let our consecration
Be real, and deep, and true;
O even now our hearts shall bow,
And joyful vows renew.

Now onward, ever onward,
From strength to strength we go,
While grace for grace abundantly
Shall from His fullness flow,
To glory's full fruition,
From glory's foretaste here,
Until His very presence crown
Our happiest New Year.

—Frances R. Havergal.

Consecrated (11).

Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful for Thee;
Take my voice and let me sing,
Always—only—for my King.

Take my lips and let them be,
Filled with messages for Thee;
Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold.

Growth. (10)—In Longfellow's declining years a friend asked him how it was possible for him to keep so energetic and write with such power. Pointing to an apple tree in bloom the poet replied: "That apple tree is very old, but I never saw

prettier blossoms on it than those it now bears. The tree grows a little new wood each year, and I suppose it is out of that new wood that those blossoms come. Like the apple tree, I try to grow a little new wood each year."

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The True Solution of Life's Problem (12).

A Christian man sat in the Master's presence thinking of the coming of the new year. It was a good but solemn thing to do. The man's thoughts in that presence ran thus: "Seeing him I am sure that every year is 'the year of our Lord.' It ought to be 'begun, continued, and ended in him.' He will be with me all the days. My days must be in his hands." The Christian man continued his meditation—always in His presence, "What sort of man ought I to be, this year and all years?" The answer came out of an old word which had new meaning, in his presence: "complete in him." Again he asked: "What kind of work ought I to do this year and all years?" The centuries fade away and he seems to hear again: "Whatsoever he saith unto you do it." He asked again, "Where shall I go to be his man and do his work?" Once more old words leap into new times: "To your household, to your neighbor, and to all the world." "How can I do all this?" "The entrance of his word giveth light," therefore give yourself to Bible study; "not by might nor by power but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts," therefore give yourself to prayer; "I can do all things through Christ," therefore give yourself to work; "in all things he shall have the pre-eminence," therefore give yourself to him. And the man arose from the meditation to make the New Year and all years, years of the Lord. And the Master arose and went with the man.—N. W. Christian Advocate.

The Surrendered Life (13).

One day, as Dr. Leighton Parks was in his study, a young Japanese called upon him. The young man entered very abruptly and said, "Sir, can you tell me how to find the beautiful life?"

Dr. Parks answered, "Do you wish to talk with me about religion?"

"No, sir; I merely want to find out about the beautiful life."

"Have you ever read the Bible?"

"Yes, sir, I have read some, but I don't like the Bible."

"Have you ever been to church?"

"Yes, I have been twice, but I don't like the church. I do not want your religion. But there is something I want. I can not tell what it is; I call it the beautiful life, and they told me perhaps you could tell me about it."

"Where did you ever hear about it?"

"I never heard about it, but I saw a man in a boarding-house in San Francisco, soon after I landed—a poor man, not an educated man like myself, who have studied in a university in Japan, and now am studying in one of your great universities; a poor man he was, a carpenter, but he had what all my life I have wanted. I have thought it might be in the world, but I have never seen it in my own country. I call it the beautiful life. How can I find it? This old man went about helping everybody; he was always happy; he never thought about himself."

Dr. Parks read him the thirteenth chapter of the first Book of Corinthians, and asked:

"Is that it?"

The Japanese said, "Yes, perhaps. It sounds like it; but how can I get it?"

Then Dr. Parks took that wonderful story of the perfectly beautiful life, and tried to tell him very simply, and said:

"Now, you have just to follow that life."

And then, as he was obliged to go, he gave him a copy of the New Testament.

Dr. Parks heard nothing from the young man for a year or two, and then received a letter, saying:

"I am called back to my own country to an important position. Before I go I must see you. May I call at a certain hour?"

The next day, however, just at noon, he burst in as he had done before, very abruptly, saying:

"My train leaves at 2 o'clock. I must take that train to catch the steamer at San Francisco to go back to my country. I have something to tell you."

But he did not need to tell one word. It was written on that radiant face.

"Sir, I have found the beautiful life. I have found Jesus," he exclaimed; and then, unable to linger, he went back to his own country to tell the people of the Life once lived here on earth, and lived here again in the lives of God's children today. —Selected.

Partial Consecration Disastrous (14).

"This," said Deacon Hays, "is probably the last ship I shall ever build, and I intend to have her as perfect as possible."

So he selected a beautiful model, and, knowing that the owner wanted something very superior, he spared no time or money in procuring the best timber to be had and the best workmen to be found; and then he watched over every stick as it was hewn and fitted in its place, every plank that was spiked on the timbers, every spar that was prepared. When they come to put the copper sheathing over the bottom of the ship, the deacon watched it very closely. At one spot he found the head of a copper nail which fastened the sheathing split. The deacon's eyes were becoming rather poor, but he saw the broken head. "Jim Spiker, I see a nail broken; isn't there a little hole by its side?"

"Not a bit of it, I'm sartin. There couldn't a drop of water get in there in a century."

So the word of Jim was accepted; the ship was finished and launched, and made two or three prosperous voyages. During one of these she lay at a wharf in Calcutta. Now, these waters swarm with that little pest, the ship-worm. They crawled all over the ship, but could not get through the copper sheathing. At length Mrs. Teredo lit upon the broken nail, found the little hole, and squeezed herself in. Then she began to eat the timber and lay her eggs in it. Soon they hatched and increased, till that timber was full of little teredos, and then the next and the next, till every stick in the whole ship was very badly worm-eaten. Still, the ship looked sound, sailed well, and made her long voyage. At length, when in the middle of the great ocean, a terrible storm met her. The wind howled through the rigging, as if singing a funeral dirge. The waves rolled up, and writhed as if in agony. Every spar was bent, and every timber and spike strained to the utmost. The cargo which filled the ship was of immense value. The crew was large and the passengers were many. Worse and worse grew the storm, till at last a huge wave struck her with all its power. The poor ship staggered, groaned once, and crumpled up like a piece of paper. She foundered at sea, in the dark night, in that awful storm. The rich cargo all went to the bottom of the ocean. The drowned men and women sank down, down, miles before they rested on the bottom. All done through the neglect of Jim Spiker, who was too unfaithful to mend the hole made by the broken nail.

Half Way Surrender (14a).

A missionary in Swaziland, in South Africa, told a native that feathers make a good bed. The native went to his kraal and spread a few feathers on a board, and when he woke the next morning he was stiff and sore and complained that the missionary was "a liar." The trouble was not in the missionary, but in the fewness of the feathers. In our Christian life if we sow sparingly we reap sparingly. If we rob God and his poor of the fellowship that belongs to them, doing only what we must to keep up the appearance of righteousness, we need not wonder if, at times, we only have joy enough to keep us miserable in our souls. But on the other hand the hilarious giving of the second mile means joy and victory in our own lives, a living fellowship with the Lord, and the gospel of those who will not have it unless we practice such giving. In which mile do we live?—Christian Witness.

A Fresh Start (15).

As mountain travelers, at some resting place
Are fain to pause, their distant path to trace,
Bathed in the purple haze, their eyes yet scan
The clustering homestead where that path began.
The joyous stream that slaked their eager thirst,
The turning point whereon their vision burst,
A world of glory, never dreamed before—
E'en so the New Year bids us pause once more,
Sweet memory's softening influence to feel,
While at the wayside cross she bids us kneel:
Then the brave hearts serener heights ascend,
Where the sunlight and deep peace forever blend.

The Difference in the Life (16).

"I have listened to an appeal for faith in Christ made by the cook on my steamer, which was more eloquent than many I have heard from lawn sleeves. It was impossible to sleep through that discourse, or to be indifferent to it. It was simply a series of facts, which, knowing him, I knew were true, and they went right home to their mark. I was called once to see a man dying on a fishing-vessel off this coast. As I left the cabin he called out, 'You've forgotten me, Doctor, I'm the man who was converted at —— two years ago.' 'Well,' I said, 'what difference has it made to you?' 'Ask the skipper,' he replied. The remarks of his skipper were no end of a help to my faith—Dr. W. Grenfell.

SERVICE II.

Our Glorious Leader.

Hebrews 12:2.

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith."

Lesson:—Hebrews 11:39—12:6.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Christ died to make our salvation possible**; to put it within our reach. "Author."

2. **He lives to lead the redeemed on up into fuller and richer experiences** of His saving grace. "Finisher."

3. **Our unvarying attitude** should be one of reverent contemplation and readiness to respond to His guidance. "Looking unto Jesus."

4. By looking unto Him, and faithfully following Him, **we grow like Him.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Believe Him (17).—I know **whom** I have believed. Not a thousand doctrines, but one **Person**; that was all he needed. That is all we need. We can almost do without every other certainty if we have only this certainty. There are hours when a man distrusts everything and everybody, terrible hours; yet even then he will be saved from despair and moral suicide if he only turns to the Man of Nazareth and Calvary and says there is truth in him; he never deceived any one, he never will deceive. There are times when every other hope is shattered, when disappointment meets us in the very path where we have walked and labored with most confidence, when the dearest affections on which we have leaned are broken. Even then our world will have sunshine in it and promise, if in the thick darkness our eyes still see the face of the Son of God. Believe that whatever he did was right, and that whatever he said was true; that in him there was no spot of sin or possibility of error. Believe that all his great and precious promises were made with perfect foresight, and that he is ever able to fulfil them. Believe that in his hands are the destinies of this poor world which he came to save.—Rev. J. C. Greenbough.

Lost Faith (18).—Ample provision is made for the guidance of God's people, yet how many come to grief because they do not allow themselves to be guided aright. Abraham was definitely led into the promised land, but when famine came he

failed to stand the test and fled without divine direction into Egypt; but while out of God's order he has no vision, voice or revelation from above. His fellowship is broken, his faith dimmed, his worship interrupted, his growth arrested, his testimony lost. Silence and darkness reign over that unfortunate period of his life. Not until he returns to the land is his altar rebuilt, his communion restored and his blessings regained.

Lot pitches his tent toward Sodom, contrary to the divine will, and receives the penalty that is meet.

A young man was deeply concerned about his soul's welfare and resolved to attend prayer meeting to get help. His companions resolved to break the spell and persuade him to accompany them to their accustomed places of pleasure. He yielded and in a few weeks was a murderer and a suicide.

Another young man came to the city from a Christian home. He was induced to visit the theater and soon he drifted into a life of extravagance, gambling, shame and into an early grave.

Two young men on their way to prayer meeting were urged by friends whom they met to join them in a night of revelry. One resisted and found peace with God; the other yielded, became hardened in sin, and in three months was languishing in prison.—Mosier.

Watch Him (19).—The writer of Hebrews says, fix your gaze not on these your comrades and fellow soldiers, but upon your Captain who leads you in faith and **who alone exhibits the life of faith in its perfect form.**

The term "Captain" (rather than "Author") suggests one who goes before us and cripples the common enemy and makes a way for His followers through the thick of the fight. It suggests one who fights from the same level and by his superior strength wins victory for himself and others; the strong swimmer who carries the rope ashore and so not only secures His own position, but makes rescue for all who will follow; the daring man who goes first and treads down the drifted snow, leaving a lane for the weaker to walk in; the originator of salvation to all by himself leading the way from the present actual life of men in this world to the glory beyond. There is only one path by which any one in human nature can reach his destiny, and that lies through temptation and the suffering which temptation brings. Christ being leader must take this way. He was human and obliged to make growth in human righteousness, made under

the law, subject to human conditions and exposed to all human temptations, finding his strength not in himself but in another even as we, needing faith as we need faith.—Marcus Dods, D.D.

Personal (20).—Christ is a personal Saviour. It is not a **proposition** that saves our soul, but a **person.** It is not in some abstract way that Christ becomes a Saviour to us, but we as persons must have to do with this person—so there is the personality of the **saving** one. We find that in the Apostolic days the apostles never went anywhere, in the exercise of their function of preaching the Word, and preached mere doctrines; they did not preach the atonement, or the extent of the atonement, or the nature of the atonement; they did not tell people even to believe in the atonement, or to believe in something **about** Christ, or to believe in what Christ had done for them; but they went everywhere preaching Christ—Christ a personal Saviour, not a propositional Saviour, not a logical Saviour, but a **personal** one.

Follow Him (21).—It is said that the shepherd driveth them out, for that was not the manner of shepherds, but that he leadeth them, going before to call them after him,.....leading them into paths that he has trod and dangers he has met and sacrifices he has borne himself, calling them after him to be only followers.. No disciple is a real disciple till he becomes a follower, going after the shepherd, as one that follows by name and is drawn by love.—Horace Bushnell.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

One Look at Your Leader! (22).

Every man has his periods of discouragement—the greater the work, the more terrible the strain of fighting against them. It is a comfort to think that Christ himself knew the power of these temptations, so that he can be "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." The great point for the Christian is to know his one only source of courage and begin to draw on it as soon as possible—"I am with thee." Bishop Moore, of China, says that Minister Conger told him that "in the siege of Pekin the only man who utterly broke down and helplessly despaired was the French minister, an avowed and boastful atheist." No Christian need despair; or, if for a moment he finds himself disheartened, one look at this glorious word of Christ's to Paul is enough to brace him quickly for conquest or endurance.—

A Safe Leader (23).

Twenty-five years ago much of northern Michigan was entirely new country, covered with dense forests, and almost without roads. The best woodsman was liable to be lost among the trails, unless he carried a pocket compass. A settler of those days tells this story:

"One day I had been in the woods, when, tho I could not see the sun or sky, I knew by settling darkness that night was coming on, and started, as I thought, for home. I was so certain of my direction that for some time I did not look at the compass. On doing so, however, I was greatly surprised to find that, whereas I had thought I was going east, in reality I was bound due west. Not only was I surprised, but so sure of my own judgment and so disgusted with the compass, that I raised my arm to throw it away:

"Then pausing I thought, 'You have never lied to me yet, and I'll trust you once more.' I followed it and came out all right."—Homiletic Review.

His Call (24).

One day the shepherd passed, and, turning, said,
"Come, follow me;"
What wonder that in haste I rose,
So kind was he!

. . . . . .

From out no other eye has ever beamed
Such love on me;
Good Shepherd, lead, and I will follow
Hard after thee. —M. Fraser.

Looking Unto Jesus (25).

In the gallery at Dresden there is a wonderful portrait painting painted by Titian. It is the face of a brother artist which we first see, whose features stand out from the canvas clear and full of life. But as we gaze, we see in the background Titian's own face dimly portrayed; he is looking, not at us, but at the face in the foreground. What the artist has accomplished on canvas Peter and John and the other Apostles accomplished in their lives. They always placed Christ in the foreground, and they were always looking at their Master; others could see that they were absorbed in him and his interests.—Tarbell.

Followers Become Leaders (26).

As my guide climbed the mountain he carried a hatchet and cut gashes in the trees here and there along the way. That is called "blazing," and it marks out the path for the next time. There are few wildernesses now that are not traversed by many blazed paths. Moreover, every step I took in following my guide I was wearing away the moss and underbrush and packing the ground, and helping though ever so little, to make a distinct path for those that would come after me.

And that is what every follower of our heavenly Guide is doing in this world—helping to make a path that will make the next Christian's "walk and conversation" easier and safer.—The Congregationalist.

How To Look (27).

Five minutes spent in the companionship of Christ every morning—ay, two minutes, if it is face to face and heart to heart—will change the whole day, will make every thought and feeling different, will enable you to do things for his sake that you would not have done for your own sake, or for any one's sake.—Professor Drummond.

Men Who Looked (28).

Dr. Doddridge was accustomed to ask for the Spirit's leading before undertaking a journey, a sermon, a book for the press, or any new or difficult task. George Müller always prayed until he knew the will of God about every change or enlargement in his great orphanage work. When this was clear he had unlimited faith for all supplies, wisdom and success. "He that is willing to do his will shall know of the teaching." "Then shall ye know if ye follow on to know the Lord."

Follow Your Leader In Service (29).

It is a great thing to come to Christ; it is the turning point of life. And it is a great thing to abide in him in the storm and conflicts and terrors of the world.

"Safe to the hidden house of thine abiding
Carry the weak knees and the heart that faints;
Shield from the scorn and cover from the chiding,
Give the world joy, but patience to the saints."

It is a great thing to come to Christ; it is a great thing to abide in him; but from his point of view the object of our coming and of our abiding is that we should go. He wants us as his messengers—as his fellow-messengers. His purpose is that, abiding

in him, we should bear the fruit which is for the healing of the nations; that we should be the communicators of the light which shines upon the people who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. If I do not go, I am like an untimely birth, or I am like a seed which has rotted in the ground. He bade me come, he encouraged me to abide in order that I might go.—Normal Christian.

Safety in Following (30).

A clergyman, standing at the foot of an almost perpendicular precipice, was gazing at the towering rock above him. At an immense height he perceived a solitary sheep, which, tempted by a patch of green grass, had strayed from safety. While wondering how it would return, he heard a voice though no one was visible. It was the shepherd's voice. The sheep heard it, too, and began to retrace its steps. The ledge was so narrow it could not turn, but walking backwards, following the sound, gradually left the dangerous precipice, and bounded off to join the shepherd.—The S. S. Chronicle.

Growing Like Him (31).

The silkworm grows to be similar in color to the leaves on which it feeds. The tree-frog takes on the hue of that to which it clings. So the human soul becomes Christlike when Christ is to that soul the bread of life. If we walk with him, commune with him, feed on him, and become satisfied with his likeness, the world will take note we have been with Jesus.

SERVICE III.

Witnesses For Christ.

John 1: 41, 42.

"He first findeth his brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah . . . And he brought him to Jesus."

Lesson—John 1: 35-51.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. We are saved for **service—God expects it.**
2. We are saved for **service—Gratitude and love prompt it.**
3. We may save by being **heralds,** and **witnesses.**
4. **As witnesses we testify to others of Christ,** speaking out of the gladness of our own experience.
5. The testimony of the redeemed is **God's method for the spread of his Kingdom.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Reasons for your Faith. (32)—Be able to state clearly a few reasons why we believe the Bible to be the word of God, a clear view of the central doctrines; of sin, the atonement, repentance, faith, instant and complete acceptance with God, the care of God for those who trust. Note Paul's method,—"opening and alleging" (Acts 17: 3); set the truth forth clearly, and testify earnestly to its importance. Note Christ's method; clothe the truth in garments of illustration from common things so fittingly that the garments will seem to be made in the form of the reason for the hope that is in you (1 Pet. 3: 15). The persons who accept the most of clear and decisive teaching will probably prove the most stable and useful when won.

Fishers and Hunters of Men. (33)—Success in soul-winning is only given to skill, earnestness, sympathy, perseverance. Men are saved not in masses, but by careful study and well-directed effort. It is said that such is the eccentric flight of the snipe when they rise from the earth that it completely puzzles the sportsman, and some who are capital shots at other birds are utterly baffled here. Eccentricity seems to be their special quality, and this can only be mastered by incessant practice with the gun. But the eccentricity of souls is beyond this, and he had need be a very spiritual Nimrod, a "mighty hunter before the Lord," who would capture them for Christ.

Let the Jonahs Awake. (34)—The church has never ceased to be the church of Christ, has never utterly forgotten his word, has never utterly failed him, and never will. Jacob Riis says that Hans Christian Anderson was much afraid of being buried alive, and every night for years he pinned to his blanket, before he slept, a card, on which was written, "I guess I am only in a trance." Let no one mistake the lethargy of the church for death, let no one overlook the seventy times seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal or any other god. During the time when the church seemed indifferent there were souls all aflame with zeal. When the church seemed dull, men were burning out for God, putting to shame all our boasted energy.

But now it is high time for all of us to awake out of sleep.—The Growing Church.

Hand Touch. (35)—A man fell through the ice into the river one bitter cold day. A fellow workman came to his assistance with a plank, one end of which was covered with ice. The struggling man grasped it again and again, but every time his hand slipped off. At last he cried, "For God's sake, man, give me the other end of the plank!" I fear many of our so-called efforts for the salvation of men are performed with the icy end of a plank. Put out the other end. Better still, throw the plank away and reach down your hand to these struggling ones, and by the power of grace divine you shall save immortal souls from the icy waters of sin.—The Passion for Souls.

The Christian's Business. (36)—Soul-winning is the chief business of the Church, and in our success in this work God is to have his highest glory.

1. Our Lord teaches us so in his last discourse, "Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit" (John 15:11). What this fruit is is clear from verse 16: "I have ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit."

2. The commission under which we all labor declares it most unmistakably. "Go make disciples." That is the order. He died "that repentance and remission of sin should be preached in his name among all nations."

3. The endowment of power given on the day of Pentecost was to the end that their testimony might be in power for the conversion of men.

4. The special preparation which the first preachers made for their ministry shows that they regard this as their chief work.

5. The results of the early ministry show that they considered soul-winning their chief concern. They went everywhere preaching, and everywhere they seem to have been blessed and successful in their work.

6. The example and record of the apostolic work shows it. Who are the men most famous in the early Gospel history? Why, the great soul-winners. Peter and Paul and Philip and Timothy and Titus and Apollos.

7. The apostolic exhortations show that it was the will of God that this should continue to be the great work of the ministry. "Take heed to thyself and to thy doctrine (an exhortation greatly needed now), for in doing this thou shalt save thyself and them that hear thee."—George F. Pentecost, D.D.

Holding the Truth. (36a)—A short time ago I went through the cement caves of Southern Indiana. I saw the men drilling there. One man would hold the drill, while another beside him, with a great sledge hammer, would strike it. Thus one would place the drill and the other strike until the hard cement had been pierced and was ready for the blast. The Christian witness-bearer needs but simply hold the truth in place, and the Holy Spirit will drive it home. He is the convicting power. He gives life to the Word which will "pierce even to the dividing of soul and spirit of both joints and marrow, and is quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart."—Brougher.

Truth Gains Hearing. (37)—With the gift of the Holy Ghost for service comes the power to arrest attention. This was seen remarkably in the case of the apostles. It was seen in their public preaching. They were not popular in one sense; they were probably the most hated men the world then had. But whether men hated them or loved them, when they spoke men listened. Their audience might be small or it might be large, but it was always attentive. And the same thing was seen in their private conversation. The story of Lydia shows how words spoken in the power of the Spirit arrest attention and find their way to the heart.—Campbell Morgan.

Just a Word (38).

Archbishop Ussher used to say to those friends with whom he happened to be in conference, "Now, just a word about the Lord Jesus, ere we part."

ILLUSTRATIONS.

To The Rescue (39).

A London church paper has the following interesting reference to the present efficient and successful Bishop of Uganda: "Bishop Tucker is a member of a family which has high artistic gifts. He himself aspired to exhibit in the Royal Academy, and set his hopes on a picture which he called 'Homeless.' It was the picture of a lonely woman struggling through the snow and sleet, with her child at her bosom. Every door was closed against her. She was homeless. As Bishop Tucker painted, suddenly the thought came to him, 'Why don't I go to rescue lost people instead of painting pictures of them?' He turned aside from art, though he still paints and sketches admirably, went into the ministry, and ultimately began his life-work in East Africa. Then came the call to Uganda, and his consecration as bishop."

Unexpected Fruit (40).

Mr. Evans was supplying a pulpit for a Sabbath during his vacation. At the close of the services, a lady hurried forward to speak to him.

"Oh!" she said, eagerly, "I am so glad to meet you at last. I've been on the lookout for you for years to tell you how God used your words to lead me to the Saviour!"

"Indeed!" said Mr. Evans, quite astonished at this sudden news, "I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance."

"Is not your name Evans, and did'nt you live at Beechworth, and didn't you have a class of boys in Sabbath-school, and didn't you go out walking once with Frank Bently, and stop near a pond, and explain to him that 'to as many as received' Christ, God gave the right to 'become the sons of God'? He seemed to drink in the truth, and you both knelt down just there, and asked God to save him, that very afternoon. You remember now?" she added, seeing his look change.

"Yes, indeed, I remember that day perfectly," he said, "But how did you know about it? we were quite alone at the time."

"Ah!" Mrs. Charlton said, smiling, "You forgot those bushes between the pond and the lane. I was on the other side of them, and heard all that was said, and God made it a great blessing to me."

"Praise God!" said the preacher, joyfully.

"How wonderful his ways are! But do you know about

Bently? I was only visiting in Beechworth, and have often wondered whether he was converted."

"Yes, indeed! He is a minister and a very useful man."

The two parted both happier and stronger for their meeting. —Sel.

Witnessing for Christ (41).

A nobleman of Bangkok, Siam, whom the missionaries had vainly tried to lead to Christ, sent his only son to the Christian high school for boys. A year or two later, in an epidemic of cholera, the boy died. The missionary gently told the parent about the Good Shepherd, who sometimes takes a lamb in his arms to induce the sheep to follow him. Deeply moved, the father sketched an outline of the incident and bade an artist paint it. He showed this picture: A shepherd, with a face kindly and sweet, carrying a lamb in his bosom, while far off two sheep, which had been walking away, were turning with wistful eyes to follow their loved one. "Now," said the nobleman, "I want to give ten thousand ticals to build a church in recognition of God's dealing with me through my boy." The church was built, and thus the nobleman also became a "fisher of men."—The Gospel Messenger.

Improving Opportunities (42).

One day when James Brainerd Taylor, then a young man, was out driving, he stopped at a water-trough. Another young man was watering at the same trough. Taylor said: "I hope you love the Lord. If not, I want to commend him to you as your best friend." The strangers went their way. The young man was converted, entered the ministry, and went to Africa as a missionary. Many times did he wish that he knew who the man was that spoke to him at the watering-trough, but he never did until some one sent to him in Africa a box of books. Opening one of the books at the title-page, he saw a portrait, and exclaimed: "Oh, that is the man! That is the man who preached to me at the watering-trough." It was the portrait of Brainerd Taylor.—Bottles of Heaven.

A Faithful Witness (43).

At the funeral of a man, very generous and lovely, but ungodly and dissipated, I felt unwilling to make a funeral address that should be untrue to my convictions of the truth of the Word of God. Accordingly I spoke to the business men, present in very

large numbers, who had been his companions, about the folly of neglecting the soul even for the sake of worldly profit. They had expected to hear a eulogy of the dead, and get comfort in their own ungodliness, and were much incensed. One of them, cursed and swore that he would provide in his will that I should never officiate at his funeral. Shortly after, God smote him with incurable disease, and for many months he lingered in great agony, and died. He would send for me and cling to me like a child, confess to me his sinful life, and beg me to pray for him and with him. Before his death he wrote me a letter with a trembling hand—a letter that is to me as precious as gold. In it he says: Be always honest and true with men; tell them the truth, and even those who at the time may take offense, will afterward stand by you and approve your course." When he came to look into the great hereafter, he wanted no shallow quicksand of flattering falsehood on which to rest his feet. There comes a time when every man wants to know the truth.—A. T. Pierson, D.D.

Winning By Sympathy (44).

How many strayed souls have been won by sympathy and kindness! Referring to a poor creature whom he had picked up in one of the streets of London, the truly noble Lord Shaftesbury said: "One night I found a stranded bit of driftwood. She seemed broken-hearted, and I started her in business with a cress and coffee stand. Her fidelity and service of love among the poor in the year since her reform have made her a veritable angel of mercy in the tenement district where she lives. During a long life I have proved that not one kind word ever spoken, not one kind deed ever done, but sooner or later returns to bless the giver and become a chain binding men with golden bands to the throne of God."—Sunday-School Journal.

A Negligent Witness (45).

My friend confessed with shame that he had often shirked and dodged opportunities which God had put in his way to speak to men about Christ. He found his neighbor deeply concerned because of a conversation which he had had on the train with a stranger who urged him to accept Christ as his Saviour. The stranger proved to be D. L. Moody, the great evangelist, and his conversation had impressed the man so deeply that he was ready to confess his desire to settle the matter rightly. Mr. R—— was deeply moved, and there on the street corner he led his friend

to accept Jesus Christ. Then as he left his friend and started homeward, he lifted his eyes to heaven and cried: "God forgive me! There is something wrong about my Christianity! I have been counting myself one of the leading Presbyterian elders of this city, and yet a friend of mine can tell me that for fifteen years I have touched his life without ever saying one word about my Saviour to him. There is something wrong about my Christianity!" And he was right. There is something wrong about that kind of Christianity. Yet that is the kind that thousands are living whose names are on Church rolls. And it can mean but one thing, taken in connection with that pitiful seven per cent. It means that thousands go for days and weeks and months and years without ever saying or doing one single thing personally to try to win one soul to the Saviour.—Victorious Manhood.

SERVICE IV.

Manifesting The Christ Life.

2 Cor. 4: 10.

"That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

Lesson—2 Cor. 4: 6-11.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. "God hath **shined in.**" (v. 6). **The origin of our light.**
2. "The light of the knowledge of **the Glory of God** in the face of Jesus Christ." **The nature of this light in us.**
3. The **purpose:** "That it might be **made manifest.**"
    1. Conscious influence.
    2. Unconscious influence.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Heart and Head. (46)—There is abundant evidence to show that a religious life which is constrained and maintained only by the intellect lacks that glow and warmth of sincere affection which is the health of Christian life. After all, comparatively few people are won to Christ by the way of the intellect. The emotional becomes the Appian Highway on which souls travel to the Eternal City of God on high. And then, too, if reason must be given the supreme place, what shall we say of faith by which we are justified? If intellect alone could make a Christion, Saul of Tarsus, the student under Gamaliel, would have been not only convinced, but also converted.—Herald and Presbyter.

Principle. (47)—A great, masterful principle is necessary to life. No nation ever outlived its maintenance of something distinctive and aggressive. No party can hang together upon nothing. Even the binding and vivifying force of "spoils" can not hold it long together. No man or woman ever rose to eminence who had not something special to live for and to give to the world. The religion of Christ is a positive thing. Christ himself was the great "affirmation." "In him was yea." Those who follow him closely will become like him.—Southwestern Presbyterian.

Rare Jewel. (48)—The only consistency which is a jewel is the soul's harmony with truth and the utterance of lip and life

in accord with its last and best apprehension.—New York Observer.

The Soul's Ambition. (49)—Happiness is not our being's end and aim. The Christian's aim is perfection, not happiness; and every one of the sons of God must have something of that spirit which marked their Master—that holy sadness, that peculiar unrest, that high and lofty melancholy, which belongs to a spirit which strives after heights to which it can never attain.—F. W. Robertson.

How to be Beautiful. (50)—We were not all of us born with pretty faces—but we can all of us try to get both. And there is some satisfaction in working on one's disposition. You may not be able to altar the shape of your nose of to make large melting eyes out of a pair of optics that are good for little except seeing. But if you cultivate an interest in those about you, if you try to make the world happier for those with whom you are brought into association, you will not fail before long to get a pleasing expression that will make the physical defects be forgotten or to seem charms because they are a part of a lovely and generous personality.

Counterfeits. (51)—The one thing that goes farthest to justify the railing and scoffing of infidels at the religion of Christ is the inconsistency of its professors. But even here they unwittingly pay a tribute to the excellency of the gospel, because they imply that if men were to conform to it they would be above reproach. But who would praise an infidel for consistency with his creed? The counterfeit hypocrite proves the genuineness of that which he simulates. Men counterfeit the true, not the false. But counterfeits are still bad. They are intended to deceive. But are all inconsistent persons deceivers? By no means. Consistency is the agreement of the life with the profession. A man who makes a good profession ought to make his profession good. But he does not always do it.—Schwartz.

Like Him. (52)—Complete Christlikeness is the Christian's ideal, the goal toward which he must press. It is the one standard which the true Christ-lover will ever set before him; nor will he be content unless he is continually realizing greater degrees of approximation to it. It is the one thing in earth and heaven most worthy of effort. To have an insatiable thirst for it, to be ever on the stretch after it, is our only permissible attitude. This is the most important study. This is the finest of the fine

arts. This is the main work of life. This is our chief task, to take the natural elements of our character and by bringing them into close, permanent contact with Jesus get them so purified and mellowed, so ennobled and sublimated, that the grossness and dross shall depart while the excellence remains.—The Riches of His Grace.

Everyday Christians. (53)—Possibly the safest test to the reality of our consecration will be found in its relation to our common, everyday life, to which a greater portion of our time must be given in secular affairs and duties. We are too apt to make it alone a spiritual and ethereal thing, confined to church meetings and sacred services. It will be conceded at once that a life in the home, or in the business place, or in society, is more thoroughly tried than in a prayer meeting or in a revival. It is here where kindness, patience and unselfishness will have the best chance to show their reality. If our consecration cannot stand these tests there are no others adequate for the task.—Christian Advocate.

Great Lives. (54)—To fulfill faithfully the duties of your station; to use to the uttermost the gifts of your ministry; to bear chafing and trivial irritations as martyrs bore the pillory and stake; to find the one noble trait in people who try to molest you; to put the kindest construction on unkind acts and words; to love with the love of God even the unthankful and evil; to be content to be a fountain in the midst of a wild valley of stones, nourishing a few lichens and wild flowers or now and again a thirsty sheep; and to do this always and not for the praise of man, but for the sake of God—this makes a great life.—F. B. Meyer.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Manifesting the Christ Life (55).

A young man applied for a place as draftsman in a great establishment. The first question that was asked him was, "What have you done? Bring me some of your work."

A lad who had been taking a course in an industrial school is very proud of bringing out the different pieces of wood and iron he has wrought out. Some of them are very fine, indeed. There are gates and pieces of wood morticed together; there are boxes and wide slabs of wood so nicely jointed that one can scarcely see where they come together; and to cap the climax, he shows the visitor a beautiful gavel and a neat cup

turned by his own hands out of mahogany. In iron there are many excellent pieces fashioned by the lad in school.

Come now a step higher. Some day the question, "What have you done?" will be asked by One who has the widest field of labor of any in all the universe, and if the word, "Nothing!" slams a door in the face of men in this world, be sure that there will be far less hope of entrance into that wider realm for him who has nothing to show for the time he has spent here.

What have you done to make anyone's burden lighter? Is there a friend who has been lifted over a tight place by you? Have you ever spoken a kindly word to one in trouble? Have you kept your own heart clean and done the best you could to show somebody else how he may keep his so, too?

What have you done?—Onward.

Shining Lights (56).

Faithful Christians, those who are the real children of God, are reminded by St. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, that they "shine as lights in the world holding forth the word of life." Not all lights are of the same magnitude, but the nature of light is always the same. There are places where the smallest light may be of essential service. Lighthouses are good illustrations of this fact. Of the lights on the coasts and rivers of the United States there are some fourteen hundred, but only forty-five are of the first order. Some of the smallest show the path of safety through very narrow, intricate and perilous channels. We cannot all be lights of the first order like St. Paul or Martin Luther, or John Wesley, but we can all share to the measure of our ability in the sphere of influence which God gives us. By our fidelity, our purity, our love, our joy, our courage under the most trying circumstances we can constantly hold forth the word of life. The light of life must be made manifest in homes and workshops, in stores and factories and mines, on battlefields and in hospitals, and to the multitudes that throng the streets, or the world will be in darkness. The feeblest saint may cheer many and save at least a soul or two by letting his light shine. A candle in a cottage may be a more blessed luminary than a star in the sky.—Northwestern Christian Advocate.

Front-yard Christians (57).

A small boy had a little wagon that was a new possession and the delight of his heart, but when he brought it out to the front walk one morning he was told that he must play with it at

the back of the house. "This is Sunday," added the father by way of explanation. The boy obeyed, but he questioned wonderingly as he trudged away, "Isn't it Sunday in the back-yard, too?"—Onward.

Under Test (58).

Horace B. Claflin, the dry goods merchant, of New York, was alone in his office one afternoon when a young man, pale and careworn, timidly knocked and entered. "Mr. Claflin," said he, "I have been unable to meet certain payments, because parties failed to do by me as they agreed to, and I would like to have $10,000. I come to you because you have been a friend to my father, to my mother, and might be a friend to me."

"Come in," said Claflin, "come in and have a glass of wine."

"No," said the young man, "I don't drink."

"Have a cigar, then."

"No, I never smoke."

"Well," said the joker, "I would like to accommodate you, but don't think I can."

"Very well," said the young man, as he was about to leave the room. "I thought perhaps you might. Good-day, sir."

"Hold on," said Mr. Claflin, "you don't drink?"

"No!"

"Nor smoke, nor gamble, nor anything of the kind?"

"No, sir!"

"Well," said Mr. Claflin, with tears in his eyes, "you shall have it, and three times the amount, if you wish. Your father let me have $5,000 once and asked me the same questions. No thanks; I owed it to you for your father's sake."

What is Your Religion Worth? (59).

A gentleman was traveling from Cambridge to York, and as a true servant of the Lord Jesus he sought ever to be about his Divine Master's business. Ere he started he furnished himself with a pocketful of tracts, and as the train glided out of Cambridge station he began to hand them around.

One of the passengers refused, and taking a race card out of his pocket, he held it up, saying, "You see this, that's my religion." "Is it, my friend?" "Yes," he replied. "I suppose you have a good many of these cards?" "Oh, yes, I have them pinned all over the mantelpiece." "Well, then, go on and collect as many more as you can, pin them all around your room; and when the doctor tells you that you have only ten minutes to live,

take them all down, count them over, and see what your religion is worth."

They sat quiet, the one in silent prayer and the other in anxious thought. When the gentleman opened the door to alight the man said: "I say, you can give me one of those papers if you will."

Showing Forth Christ (60).

Said Garfield: "When I went into the war I gave my life unreservedly to the Union. I said to myself, 'If any part of this surrender shall not be required of me, if it is only a limb, or an eye, or a faculty that must be a sacrifice, I shall consider all the rest as given back to me by a most kind and indulgent Providence.' The belief that I should return a whole man, a well man, had no place in my most sanguine thoughts." When St. Francis of Assisi, the founder of the Franciscan Order in the thirteenth century, became enamored of Christ's rule of poverty, as he conceived it, he gave back to his father not only the little money he had kept, but, stripping himself of his very clothes, returned these also, and hid his shivering form beneath the friendly mantle of the consecrating bishop. From henceforth he desired to say nothing else than "Our Father, who art in heaven."

The Price of Purity (61).

"Eternal vigilance is the price of pure water," is the emphatic declaration of an official connected with the water department of New York City.

"Then you watch things," I suggested.

"If you would take a couple of months," was the answer, "and go into all the nooks and corners of that immense watershed drained for the use of New York City, you would see how closely things are watched. A constant patrol is kept on all parts of the lands drained for our use. Then at Katonah we have located the headquarters for the patrol. The men connected with that duty are kept there all the time."

If New York City was as careful of her young men and women.

As Lights in the World (62).

An English medical officer said awhile ago that a single cleanly family raises the standard of cleanliness in a whole tenement, and that he has seen the removal of one such a family effect a deterioration all around. It ought to be so with a Christian life wherever it is lived.

SERVICE V.

The New Comandment.

John 13:34, 35.

"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another! as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Lesson:—I John 3:14-24.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Love,** the **distinguishing principle** of Christianity.
2. **Love,** the **unifying principle** of Christianity.
3. **Love,** the **ennobling principle** of Christianity.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Christian's Badge. (63)—Why did He call it a new commandment? Chiefly for this reason, that he was laying down here for the first time the great rule and principle which was to bind his disciples together into a Church. He was showing them what he intended to be the prevailing note and distinguishing mark of the Church, that which would separate it from the world and evidence to the world its Divine origin. The mutual love of disciples inspired by and modelled after the love of Christ for them, was to be the one prominent feature of the new society, by which it would be known and certified. "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples if ye have love one to another."

It was **an object lesson** to the world. It served as a **magnet** to the world. It was the sweet mystery which filled the world with amazement, and then attracted it. Hearts grown sick and weary of the jealousies, alienations, hatreds, and bitterness which were all around them, fled to this new society, to find peace in its atmosphere of love, as the dove came to the ark to rest its tired wings.—Rev. J. G. Greenbough.

Conquering Heroes. (64)—When that new spirit of love was in the world, see how straightway it created a new thing. Men before that had traveled into foreign countries; the naturalist, to collect specimens; the historian, to accumulate facts; the philosopher, to hive up wisdom, or else he had stayed in his cell or grove to paint pictures of beautiful love. But the spectacle of an Apostle Paul crossing oceans, not to conquer kingdoms,

nor to hive up knowledge, but to impart life,—not to accumulate stores for self, but to give, and to spend himself,—was new in the history of the world. The celestial fire had touched the hearts of men, and their hearts flamed; and it caught, and spread, and would not stop. On they went, that glorious band of brothers, in their strange enterprise, over oceans, and through forests, penetrating into the dungeon, and to the throne; to the hut of the savage feeding on human flesh, and to the shore lined with skin-clad inhabitants of these far Isles of Britain. Read the account given by Tertullian of the marvelous rapidity with which the Christians increased and swarmed, and you are reminded of one of those vast armies of ants, which move across a country in irresistible myriads, drowned by thousands in rivers, cut off by fire, consumed by man and beast, and yet fresh hordes succeeding interminably to supply their place.

A new voice was heard; a new yearning upon earth; man pining at being severed from his brother, and longing to burst the false distinctions which had kept the best hearts from each other so long; an infant cry of life—the cry of the young Church of God.—Frederick W. Robertson.

Hating Sin. (65)—We are not required to love infirmities or imperfections; nay, we could not do so, if required, for infirmities and imperfections are naturally repelling. Our brother's true self is the object upon which our love is to fasten; and as to his infirmities and imperfections, which he shares with us in virtue of our common deterioration by the Fall, those are to be borne with and overlooked out of regard to his true self, and to the filial relation which this true self bears to God.—Does this distinction between a man's true self and his failings seem to any of my readers subtle and overstrained? Let me say that under another view of the subject, it is universally accepted. What is the meaning of saying (as we often do) that God loves the sinner, while he hates the sin? Nothing can be truer. I need not say that God not only does, but **must,** hate sin in its every form; that between him and insincerity, untruthfulness, peevishness, petulance, ill-temper—above all, perhaps, between him and selfishness—there must be an external antipathy. And yet nothing is more certain than that, while God hates my selfishness and untruthfulness, he deeply and tenderly loves me with an individualizing love.—Goulburn.

Unselfish. (66)—Love changes the pivot and center of life

from self to another. Before she flings her magic spell upon us, we are self-contained and self-centered, bending all our energies to our self-aggrandisement, compelling all streams to flow into the Dead Sea of our own interest. But when we love, a marvellous transformation passes over us. We think more often of the beloved than of ourselves. We find our plans, contrivings, activities, all ennobled and transfigured by our one consideration of what will please and help and bless that choice spirit which has gathered to itself the threads of our life, weaving them after its own sweet will, and threading them with blessedness, as black-lettered pages may be illumined by scrolls of gold and color. With such love should we love our fellow-Christians.—F. B. Meyer.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Gauge (67).

The only adequate gauge of the quality of our religious life is furnished by our attitude towards those from whom we are separated by prejudice, temper, or the consciousness of unfair and unkind behavior. These relationships furnish the real test of what we are before God; since we are towards God what we are to them.—F. B. Meyer.

The Cathedral Tower (68).

Love amid the other graces of this world is like a cathedral tower, which begins on the earth, and at first is surrounded by other parts of the structure, but at length, rising above wall and arch, parapet and pinnacle, it shoots, spire-like, many a foot, right into the air, so high its top glows like a spark in the morning light, while the rest of the pile is enveloped in darkness. So love is surrounded by the other graces and divides the honors with them, but they will have felt the wrap of night and darkness when it will shine luminous against the sky of eternity.—Tarbell's Teachers' Guide.

Speak! (69)

What use for the rope if it be not flung
Till the swimmer's grasp to the rock has clung?
What help in a comrade's bugle blast
When the peril of Alpine heights is past?
What need that the spurring paean roll
When the runner is safe beyond the goal?
What worth is eulogy's blandest breath

When whispered in ears that are hushed in death?
No, no! If you have but a word of cheer,
Speak now, while I am alive to hear.

—Margaret J. Preston.

Love Lighting Life (70).

During a damp, foggy evening along the New England shore, a summer resident who had been skirting the beach in a row-boat, was struggling at the oars, trying to drive his little craft through the waters, despite the drag upon it of a heavy object towing on behind. It was a dismal evening, and he was tired and weary of his attempted task. But just when his depression was greatest he heard the voice of his little boy hailing him from the beach. Looking through the gloom he could discern the faint glow on the shore, while his boy called encouragingly: "Papa, I'll cheer you with this lantern!" The heart of the father was gladdened, and his work after that seemed light, for so great is the power of loving sympathy that it illumines all shadows and lightens all tasks.—A. S. Dwight.

How Love Flows Back (71).

We may, if we choose, make the worst of one another. Every one has his weak points; every one has his faults; we may make the worst of these, we may fix our attention constantly upon these, but we may also make the best of one another. We may forgive, even if we hope to be forgiven. We may put ourselves in the place of others and ask what we would wish to be done to us and through us were we in their place. By loving whatever is lovable in those around us, love will flow back from them to us, and life will become a pleasure instead of a pain, and earth will become like heaven, and we shall become not unworthy followers of him whose name is Love.

Conquering Love (72)

The people of Saint Regis, Canada, many years ago bought some bells to be hung in their church, but they were captured at sea by the English and carried to Deerfield, Mass. The French and Indians attacked the place, taking the bells to St. Regis together with several captives, among whom was a lovely maiden, who was to have been married at the chiming of the bells. She had seen her lover fall in the attack and feared he was dead. But he was alive, and, as soon as he had recovered, started to find her. For days he traveled, and arrived footsore and ragged at St. Regis. The following morning, he begged to be allowed

to ring the bells, and so enchanting was the melody, the people gathered spell-bound about the ringer to learn his name. His bride recognized the music and rushed into his arms. When the story was told the bells were ordered to be rung to celebrate their marriage, which was solemnized on the spot. His love had conquered wild beasts and hunger and vast distance to prove his devotion.—Homiletic Review.

The Tie (73).

Self-centered soul, hast thou forgot
The marvel of our common lot,
The mystic tie that binds us all
Who dwell on this terrestrial ball,
The tie of solidarity;
Stupendous hope and mystery,
The far-off goal of history?
Good Lord, increase our charity!
—Henry Nehemiah Dodge.

Love's Influence (74).

"What is the secret of your life?" asked Mrs. Browning of Charles Kingsley; "tell me, that I may make mine beautiful, too." He replied, "I had a friend." Somewhere in her "Middlemarch," George Eliot puts it well: "There are natures in which, if they love us, we are conscious of having a sort of baptism and consecration; they bind us over to rectitude and purity by their pure belief about us; and our sins become the worst kind of sacrilege, which tears down the invisible altar of trust."—William C. Gannett.

Love in Action (75)

It is not the deed we do, but the spirit of it that really shows whether we have or have not the purpose of Christlike helpfulness. The Youth's Companion has a pretty story of two men who were walking briskly down Broadway recently. One of them "had a national reputation," and his picture is to be seen in all the papers.

At the corner of Cedar Street stood a short, "chunky" lad, perhaps fifteen years old, dressed in overalls and "jumper." In one hand he carried a piece of lead pipe, in the other a soiled scrap of paper. His smutty face had an anxious look.

As the two well-dressed men reached the boy he stopped them with: "Say, boss, kin yer tell me where dis place is?" and

he held out the scrap of paper. "I been chasin' meself all up an' down de street, an' I can't hit de combination."

The older man took the paper with a pleasant smile and said, "I shall be very glad to help you if I can."

He read the address and saw at once that the place was probably on the other side of the street. He excused himself to his friend, waded through the mud on the crossing, and, with the plumber's apprentice at his side, searched the signs without success.

Then he took the boy to a drug store on the corner and helped him run over the names in the directory until he found that the boy's employer had made a mistake in the number.

The correct address was substituted and the lad in overalls put upon the right track by his distinguished guide with such marked courtesy that the boy paused, as he turned away, to say in a somewhat subdued tone, "Much 'bliged to yer, sir."

The man in the silk hat bowed courteously in acknowledgment, and recrossed the street to his waiting friend.—Pilgrim Teacher.

Love Conquered Her (76)

Just across the State line in Ohio, there lived an old woman who was the terror of all who had seen or heard of her. She was finally arrested, and sent to the Columbus penitentiary. She broke every law of the institution, and they exhausted every form of punishment upon her. Times without number they had sent her to the dungeon, and for weeks at a time she lived on bread and water.

Finally an old Quaker lady from the same part of the State asked permission to see her. The prisoner was led into her presence, with the chains upon her hands and feet. With downcast eyes she sat before the messenger of Christ. The old Quaker lady simply said: "My sister."

But she came still nearer, and taking the sin-stained face in both her hands she lifted it up, and said: "I love you, and Christ loves you."

She kissed her face first upon one cheek and then upon the other; and she broke the woman's heart. Her tears began to flow like rain. She rose to her feet. They took the chains off, and until the day of her death they were never put on again, but like an angel of mercy she went up and down the corridors of the prison, ministering to the wants of others.

SERVICE VI.

The Lamb of God.

Colossians 1: 14.

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin."

Lesson:—John 1: 29-37.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. Christianity centers in a **person.** "In whom?"
2. The appropriation of its blessings must be **personal.** "We have."
3. It is a **redemption.** Slaves redeemed from bondage.
4. The central truth about that person is **the cross.** "His blood."
5. The cross exemplifies and asserts that God's attitude toward us is one of **forgiveness.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Sin Crucifies Those Who Love Us (78)—We may laugh it off in our hours of reckless worldliness, we may refuse to be broken in heart on account of transgressions no worse than our neighbors, we may persuade ourselves it matters nothing to God what kind of life men live; but still stands the cross of Christ, scattering from the eye of him who will consider it all such views of sin. This is what our sin has brought Christ to. There is the actual consequence of sin. He who loves me, and who is naturally out of reach of all that hurts and pollutes, has been brought by my sin to this.

The man who cares little that his own face should be scarred by small-pox, is terror-stricken when he finds he has carried the disease to his child, and that the first duty of his restored health is to bury the victim of his carelessness. The man who thinks little of his own evil habits takes a very different view of them, and feels it were better he had never been born when he wakes from his drunker stupor to find he has killed the one woman who loved him, who alone was patient with him, and whose lot her love for him had made a lot of shame, degradation, injury, wretchedness and death. And the sinner who thinks little of his sin so long as he believes it concerns himself alone, is dismayed and humbled when he begins to understand that the God

who loves him and is faithful to him, the One on whom at his worst and lowest he may depend, has been brought by his sin to distress, to anguish and to death.—Dods.

God is Love (79)—Let us beware of representing God as loving men only in consequence of Christ's death. This is as illogical as it is unscriptural. For it is one of the postulates of all true thinking—that God is; that God is the same; that God is the same Infinite Being, the I AM, the same in the yesterday of the past, in the to-morrow of the future, as in the to-day of the present. But if the death of Christ be represented as having pacified an inexorable and avenging Diety, causing him to love those who else must have withered under his relentless hate, it makes him other than he was, and the Divine nature must have suffered a change, which is unthinkable and inadmissible.

The death of Christ is due to the love of God. God gave his Son because he so loved the world. The cross is the expression of a love which is older than the oldest star; more ancient than the most venerable elder who stands in the zenith light of heaven; long as eternity, vast as infinity, deep as the being of God. In this was manifested the love of God, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.—Meyer.

Dead to Sin (80)—He who knew no sin was made sin for us. In Him God dealt once, and once for all, with sin. As sin is guilt, it is atoned for; as it is a principle of lawlessness its power is broken, the serpent's head is crushed beneath the bruised heel of the Redeemer. In the death of Christ, therefore, men die to sin; by his cross the world has been crucified unto us, and we unto the world.

"O Love, who lovest me for aye,
Who for my soul dost ever plead;
O Love, who didst that ransom pay,
Whose power sufficeth in my stead;
O Love, I give myself to Thee,
Thine ever, only Thine, to be."
—Life in His Name.

Purchased at a Great Price (81)—We can catch the exultant throb in Peter's heart when he wrote: "Ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and with-

out spot." It is not the grace which was in his lips, not the glory which men beheld, and still do behold, in his life, not even that adorable deed of the Incarnation, which is the sublimest truth to sinful men. The Church of Jesus has never exalted any one of them to the pre-eminence without loss. It is the cross and its redeeming sacrifice. And therefore the song which the whole ransomed Church shall sing, when it looks back with clearer eyes than are given to man on the earthly pilgrimage, is, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."—Clow.

God Forgave (82)—It would be no violation to the sense of Scripture to say, "God so forgave the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." By substituting love for forgiveness you may more easily get at the heart of this matter, for God's forgiveness is as free and full and unconditional as his love. If we will not receive the love or forgiveness of God, it cannot help us back to life and character, and we are left to suffer all the misery of sin both in this world and the world to come; and that is to be lost. Lost, notwithstanding God's love; lost, notwithstanding his forgiveness!—Grace Abounding.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Safe Under the Blood (83).

At the time of the Armenian atrocities in Turkey, a Christian Greek (now a leader in the mission work among the Greeks in Chicago) living in Thyatira, the city of Lydia, learned of the decision of the Turkish Committee to massacre all the Christians in the city on a certain night. He realized that nothing short of a miracle would save them. A sudden inspiration as from God came to him. He went out and purchased the materials with which to make an American flag. Then he went through the town and gathered all the Christians, ninety families in all, and took them into his own home, and over the entrance to this house draped the Stars and Stripes. He then notified the committee that they need not take the trouble to search for the Christians, as they were all gathered in his home, and went home to await the result. The Turks, of course, dared not attack these people sheltered by the American Flag, and the Christians were saved.—A. C. Dixon, D. D.

Looking at the Cross (84).

We stand on Calvary and behold the love of God in Christ, and we are filled with gratitude and with shame. This is penitence. But something else is needed to make repentance. The cross reveals not only divine pity and compassion; not only the nature of our sin, but also shows us ourselves at our noblest. It sets before us the ideal man, the man we ought to be, the man we want to be. Then we are inspired to emulate the fascinating example, and we set ourselves to follow in his steps.—H. P. Dewey.

He Went to Meet It (85).

Christ gave himself up with passion to his passion. Resignation is but a poor word even when used of Christians. It is not a word that can be applied to Christ at all. He did not wait to see the bitter hour creep slowly and surely up. He went out to meet it. He set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem.—W. Robertson Nicoll.

The Need of the Cross (86).

Nothing less than the death of Christ could win the trust of sinful men for God, and at the same time nothing else than the death of Christ could fully reveal the character of God in relation at once to sinners and to sin.—James Denney.

The Cross Exhibiting God's Grace (87).

Some years ago a city missionary in Boston found a young girl in the police prison. She had been arrested the night before with a number of companions—men and women—in a disorderly house. The missionary found her broken down with shame and despair; wretched and hopeless. The missionary bid her to tell him her name, and her father's address, that he might communicate with him and arrange for her return to her country home. At first she refused, but finally consented. He wrote, and after a few days a letter of loving assurance of pardon and urgent entreaty that she should come home at once, was received. She was melted by it. The coming of that letter revealed to the child the state of her father's mind toward her. It opened the door of her prison-house of shame and despair. It set her free to go home. That is what the Psalmist meant when he said, "There is forgiveness with thee." That is what Jesus meant when he said, "He hath sent me to preach glad tidings to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives."

SERVICE VII.

The Mystery of Suffering.
Isaiah 53: 10.
"It pleased the Lord to bruise him."
Lesson:—Hebrews 12: 1-13.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. In a certain sense God often deals with us as he dealt with Christ.

2. Afflictions, trials, sufferings, frequently come by his loving will. It pleased the Lord."

3. If it pleased the all-wise God to permit suffering, it must be best for us. He could prevent it.

4. If it pleased the all-loving Father, we should be able to find comfort in the thought. He loves us and yet permits it.

5. Though we may not be able to explain it, we can trust him.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Servants. (88)—Accept His will entirely and never suppose that you could serve him better in any other way. You can never serve him well, save in the way he chooses. Supposing that you were never to be set free from such trials, what would you do? You would say to God, "I am thine—if my trials are acceptable to thee, give me more and more." I have full confidence that this is what you would say, and then you would not think more of it—at any rate, you would not be anxious. Well, do the same now. Make friends with your trials, as though you were always to live together; and you will see that when you cease to take thought for your own deliverance, God will take thought for you; and when you cease to help yourself eagerly, he will help you.—Francis de Sales.

Endure Chastening. (89)—"Chastening" does not come by chance, but by design. It is not pleasant at the time of its visitation. In no case where it is endured with faith unshaken does it fail of its gracious compensation. There are true hearts passing through this experience without knowing it. They will have a glad awakening some good day.—Bishop O. P. Fitzgerald.

Trials. (90)—Into every life great trials come. There are some who for years are seemingly remarkably exempt from serious afflictions, disasters and sorrows; but even to them the

days of trouble finally come. Most people taste the bitter cup early in life, and are called to drain it more than once. The forms of affliction are manifold. The many suffer disappointments and reverses, others become suddenly maimed for life, many more lose their health, becoming chronic invalids, others are suddenly reduced from prosperity to penury, all sooner or later are called to suffer agonizing bereavements. There are those, and their number is not small, who seem continually pursued by trouble; to others life's greatest calamities and sorrows come with startling suddenness, like the terrible and destructive tempest that so swiftly darkens the sky on a peaceful and smiling summer day, filling the whole horizon with black terror illumined only by the flashing thunderbolts. In one way or another great afflictions come to all.—James E. C. Sawyer, D.D.

Refiner's Fire. (92)—Suffering finds us out; suffering more than anything else reveals us to ourselves; suffering strips us of much which had been adventitious and circumstantial, and brings us back to our own simplicity and nakedness; and it is just when the soul has been shown its own weakness, insufficiency and helplessness, that it naturally reaches out its hand for its Creator. It wants his help and strength. It longs that the the pure, wise, great Spirit of God, from which it sprang, should explain it to itself, and succor it mightily.

Thorns of the Flesh. (93)—We all have our "thorn in the flesh." It may be some physical infirmity or deformity, long-continued ill-health, an ungovernable temper, a nagging enemy, an uncongenial alliance, an ungrateful child, or a heavy bereavement. If God does not remove the thorn let us seek its purpose, and convert it into an asset; remembering that no chastening is for the present time joyous but grievous, yet in the end it yields the peacable fruit of righteousness to those who are properly exercised thereby.

What are some of these fruits of the thorn?

Paul tells us his was sent to buffet him, lest he might be exalted overmuch. Afflictions and trials ward off spiritual vanity and keep one humble.

Thorns help to develop robust character. Strong shrubs and trees do not grow in hot-houses; morally strong children are not reared in homes shielded from all knowledge of temptation and vice; and manly character is not built up in an environ-

ment of ease and indulgence. Rather is it developed by battling with difficulties.

Afflictions drive us to God. They take away that baneful feeling of independence and self-sufficiency, and make one lean on him who is mighty to save.—R. B. Perry, D.D.

Trials to Test and Teach. (94)—Read the history of martyrdom. Read the cruel tale of persecutions, which have sometimes succeeded and have stamped out the persecuted. Whenever some down-trodden remnant of the faithful—Hussite or Huguenot, Lollard or Cameronian or Armenian—some scanty band of confessors cry out against their sorrows and their failures, there is only this final answer to silence the protest of the heart; It pleased the Lord to bruise them. "God hid his face, but held them by the hand." When the worst has come to the worst for a man, in the soul's extreme anguish, this is what makes endurance possible in that utmost woe—to say to yourself, as the supreme article of faith: "It has pleased the Lord to bruise me." How can I bear it? By this certainty, that it is the Lord himself, the Lord and no one else. I am not being battered by blind shocks of doom, nor tormented by mere malice of evil-doers. I am being bruised by the hand of a living Person, who desires nothing but blessedness for me in his holy and inscrutable plan. God himself is dealing with me, and smiting me, and bringing me down into the dust; and God himself through it all is loving me with a personal, unwavering love—a love which never deserts me however little I deserve it, nor turns away from me even when I doubt and deny it—a love most near, most mighty, most pitiful, which endures beyond the end.—Rev. J. H. Darlow.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Meaning of Affliction (95).

The more one knows of the most afflicted lives, the more often the conviction flashes across us that the affliction is not a wanton outrage, but a delicately adjusted treatment.

I remember that once to a friend of mine was sent a rare plant, which he set in a big flower pot close to a fountain basin. It never throve; it lived, indeed, putting out in the spring a delicate, stunted foliage, though my friend, who was a careful gardener, could never divine what ailed it. He was away for a few weeks, and the day after he was gone the flower pot was broken by a careless garden boy, who wheeled a barrow roughly

past it. The plant, earth and all, fell into the water; the boy removed the broken pieces of the pot, and, seeing that the plant had sunk to the bottom of the little pool, never troubled his head to fish it out.

When my friend returned, he noticed one day in the fountain a new and luxuriant growth of some unknown plant. He made careful inquiries, and found out what had happened. It then came out that the plant was in reality a water-plant, and that it had pined away in the stifling air for want of nourishment, perhaps dimly longing for the fresh bed of the pool.

Even so has it been times without number with some starving and thirsty soul that has gone on feebly trying to live a maimed life, shut up in itself, ailing, feeble. There has descended upon it what looks at first sight like a calamity, some affliction unaccountable, and then it proves that this was the one thing needed, that sorrow has brought on some latent unselfishness, or suffering energized some unused faculty of strength and patience. —A. C. Benson.

Chilling Blasts (96).

During a royal ball at Moscow, when the crowded hall was full of heated vapors, the windows were lowered and the sudden chill of a Russian midnight condensed the vapors into a miniature snow-storm, which for a moment showered its feathery flakes on the breasts and brows of beauty and turned the tropics to the poles. So, says one, God sometimes sends a sudden, chilling blast of wintry sorrow that freezes our joys and clothes our most admired objects with the garments of death.

When the Birds Sing (97).

After one of the bloodiest battles in the American War, almost as soon as the cannon ceased, the song of the birds was heard all over the field, and especially from the thickets, where the dead and dying were thickly strewn.

How Suffering Brings Beauty (98).

The Persians had a vase of crystal, colorless when empty, but which flashed forth rare pictures when filled with wine. So, says one, a bosom free from pain makes a lusterless career, but a bleeding heart within gives beauty to the outward life.

Every human being carries his life in his face, and is good-looking or the reverse, as that life has been good or evil. On our features the fine chisels of thought and emotion are eternally at work.—Alexander Smith.

The Blessing of Trials (99).

The headmaster of an important school was lame, and one day a friend said to him, "What a pity that you are thus handicapped." "Do not say, 'What a pity,' but 'What a blessing,'" he answered. "When I was ten years old I slipped on the floor, and strained the ligaments of the hip. I was shut in for more than a year. One day, when I was able to hobble around on a crutch, I heard my father say, 'As James can do nothing on the farm, he may as well go to school.' 'No,' sighed mother, 'James will never be strong enough to earn his living like the other boys.' So I went to school and afterwards to college. My brothers are still on the farm, barely making a livelihood. The last time I went home my dear old mother said, 'You will never know how I prayed that you might be strong and straight like other boys; but, you see, the Lord knows best. You are doing a great work. Your brothers are all so proud of you.'"

Dr. A. T. Pierson says: "What a great blessing my late friend, Dr. Moon, of Brighton, has been, the projector of the great Moon System to help the blind to read the word of God! When twenty-three years of age he was struck with total blindness. He besought God, when the symptoms were coming on, that He would deliver him from this curse of total blindness. But the blindness continued. What did he do? It is one of the sublimest things in history. He looked up to God, and said: 'My heavenly Father, I thank thee for the talent of blindness. May I so invest that talent that, at the coming of the Lord Jesus, he may receive his own with usury.' And the Lord at once taught him that he had permitted the blindness that he might minister to the millions of blind people in the world; and Dr. Moon used his inventive faculties and devised this beautiful system, containing only a very few characters, in combination. That system has been utilized in 492 different languages and dialects. So that, after this man went to God in heaven, a few years ago, he must have found thousands of people from that day coming to heaven through reading the raised characters by which he made it possible to commune with the word of God. By taking blindness as a talent from God, and using it for God, he accomplished far more for God and man than he ever could have done if he had followed out the devices and desires of his own heart." —Sunday School Journal.

The Fruits of Chastening (100)

Milton's personality became a far more potent influence after blindness had stricken him. The loss of physical sight intensified the keenness of spiritual vision. Had Bunyan never lain in Bedford jail he had never dreamed the "Pilgrim's Progress." Had Tom Hood never known for himself the bitterness of want and the ache of pain he had never sung the "Song of the Shirt" or sobbed out his immortal dirge, "The Bridge of Sighs." Had David never fallen as he did the world would never have felt the passion of penitence and aspiration of heart which breathed through some such psalm as the fifty-first. Had John never been banished to the island of Patmos we should never have had the revelation of heaven as he has unfolded its glories in the last book of Scripture. In a sense, most solemn of all, had Christ never passed through the darkness of Calvary and tasted the bitterness of death, he had never been exalted as the Saviour of the world. It is a blessed experience surely if for any one of us from whom the sunlight of prosperity has been withdrawn for a season the light of a new purpose and the beckoning of a hand of divine strength are made manifest.—The Christian Advocate.

The Master's Plans (101).

A contemporary writer gives this very apt illustration of the duty of one's own work, and not worrying because the great plan, as a whole, is not comprehended.

"A gentleman who was walking near an unoccupied building one day saw a stonecutter chiseling patiently at a block of stone in front of him. The gentleman went up to him.

"'Still chiseling?' he remarked, pleasantly.

"'In what part of the building does this stone belong?' asked the gentleman.

"'I don't know,' replied the stonecutter; 'I haven't seen the plans.'

"Then he went on chiseling, chiseling. Now, that is what we should do. We have not seen the great plans of the Master Architect but each of us has his work to do, and we should chisel away until it is done."

Sorrow Interprets (102).

Norman Macleod used to say that the twenty-second Psalm had always been an enigma to him, but his wife's dangerous sickness had revealed its meaning to him.

SERVICE VIII.

Stepping Heavenward in Prayer.

John 16:24.

"Ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be full."

Lesson:—John 16:23-28.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. God is an inexhaustible reservoir of life's best blessings.
2. He is waiting eagerly to bestow them upon us.
3. They will be given freely to the prayer of faith.
4. "Ask and ye shall receive."

STEPPING HEAVENWARD IN PRAYER.

Prayer. (103)—No one will refuse to identify holiness with prayer. To say that a man is religious, is to say the same thing as to say he prays. For what is prayer? To connect every thought with the thought of God. To look on everything as his work and his appointment. To submit every thought, wish, and resolve to him. To feel his presence, so that it shall restrain us even in our wildest joy. That is prayer. And what we are now, surely we are by prayer. If we have attained any measures of goodness, if we have resisted temptations, if we have any self-command, or if we live with aspirations and desires beyond the common, we shall not hesitate to ascribe all to prayer.—Frederick W. Robertson.

God Answers Sometimes "No." (104)—If, then, you have to wait long, yea, even twice or thrice as long as I have had to wait, be not discouraged, provided your petitions are of that character that you are warranted by the Word of God to look for an answer. I myself have been bringing certain requests before God now for seventeen years and six months, and never a day has passed without praying concerning them all this time; yet the full answer has not come, up to the present; but I look for it. I confidently expect it."—George Müller.

Praying Always. (105)—I like prayer as an act, and I don't want to forget the significance of it. Just a little prayer thrown up by that man as he walks along the street past the open saloon and smells of that which is inside, and feels the awful craving sensation of yesterday upon him, and he is almost drawn that way until he lifts his heart up to God in prayer and gets strength to pass by.

Prayer counts when it is but an act, but when prayer becomes the attitude of the soul then the glory comes in, and the possibilities of life begin to open as they have never opened before. It is not a question of what he is called to do, or what he is called to say; in the secret moments of his life he is forging and fixing that strength of character that is to stand him in such good stead when the time of trial and testing comes, as it will come to each and every one of us.—Bishop Wilson.

Prayer Refreshes. (106)—Our Lord declared that "men ought always to pray and not to faint," and that is a very profound word. It is evident that his conception of life is that if men pray they will not faint, and conversely, if men do not pray, then will they faint. This word indicates that Jesus had a profound consciousness of the pressure and strain of life.—G. Campbell Morgan.

Asking Aright. (107)—My brother, take heed to that for which thou prayest! There lies the difference between the pious and the impious mind. It is not thy praying that makes thee good—not even thy sincerity in prayer. It is not thy sense of want that makes thee good—not even though expressed in abjectness. It is not thy feeling of dependence that makes thee good—not even thy feeling of dependence on Christ. It is the thing for which thou prayest, the thing for which thou hungerest, the thing for which thou dependest.—George Matheson.

Prayer, Universal. (108)—And so the prayer, singularly simple for infant lips, yet profound enough to be beyond all our measure, continues to be repeated the world round and ages through. Now, in our want, we emphasize the one part, and anon, the other. . . . Its grand calmness, so unlike the fervid repetitions of the Hebrew prayers of its age, and its practical petitions that God would "give," and "forgive," and "lead"; its breadth, covering all the distance from the Father on the throne to man in his weakness and want, spanning, too, the centuries from the beginning of "the kingdom" until its fulness shall "come";—all these make it the model prayer of the Christian dispensation.—D. W. Faunce, D.D., in "Prayer as a Theory and a Fact."

Time to Pray. (109)—Daniel found leisure to rule the realm of Babylon, and leisure to pray three times a day. Some would say that he must have been a first-rate man of business to find so much time for prayer. It would be nearer the truth to say,

that it was his taking so much time to pray which made him so diligent and successful in business. It was from God that Daniel got his knowledge, his wisdom and his skill. This was the secret of his being found by the king ten times better than all the wise men that were in all his realm. The man must be busier than Daniel, who has not time to pray, and wiser than Daniel who can do what Daniel did without prayer to help him. —Life in Earnest.

Peace Reflects. (110)—"I noticed," says Robert Collyer, speaking of a summer spent in a retired spot on the English coast, that "once in awhile there would come a day when the waters would leap into white foam in their strife with the great calm cliffs; and then a day when the blue waters would melt into the sky full of innocent dimples, which made you feel as if the tides were laughing with content. But this was what I noticed besides: that in the clear waters rested the full sun, while in the unresting waters you saw only broken lights. There was shining on the edges, but not in the deeps; a stormful grandeur, but no mirror of the quiet heavens." Alone in stillness and contemplation does the heart see God as He is.

Patience in Prayer. (111)—We have need of patience in prayer, for God does not always give a speedy answer to the petitions of his children. George Müller tells of continuing in prayer ten, twelve, and even twenty years for specific blessings that eventually came. The psalmist says, "I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me and heard my cry."

Spirit-filled. (112)—The last step in the prayer life is by far the most glorious of all. It is when we come to realize that our lives are but a ceaseless expression of the Spirit's prayers. Down deep beneath the threshhold of the conscious self we know the Spirit of the Father—the Spirit of Jesus—is ever striving to work out the "sweet will of God." When we commit our prayers to him as well as our works and ways, a new day dawns upon the heart—everything begins to glow with the glory of God.

(113) An hour of solitude passed in silence and earnest prayer in conflict with and conquest over a single passion or subtle bosom sin will teach us more of thought, will more effectually awaken the faculty and form the habit of reflection, than a year's study in the schools without them.

(114) Every prayer is a transaction with order. You go home

with a packet of seeds for your little girl, and you take her out and say: "This little plot shall be yours. Whatever comes of this packet of seeds shall be yours." Now what can come of a penny packet of seeds in all this infinite universe, with stars and systems whirling round? Beauty can come of it! Life can come of it! Why? Because your little gardener is transacting with order. She is dealing with law, and law will deal with her, and out of the seed she sows there shall come beauty to gladden her. When she kneels an hour or two later and breathes forth from a pure heart a prayer to the eternal God for blessing upon herself and you, will you say, "What good can come of it?" Good can come of it! Good must come of it! She comes to where law rules, where right is triumphant. Prayer is not a dip into a lucky bag. It is dealing with eternal law.—Rev. J. Morgan Gibbon.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Prayer Calm (115).

"No day is well spent that is spent without a still moment."

In a certain large high school for young women, an old-time requirement was that every girl should spend at least twenty minutes a day in absolute quiet. Some of the students rather rebelled at this break in the day's activities, and spent the little period in doing fancy work, in repairing their clothes, or in reading sensational stories. Others accepted the plan, relaxed into easy attitudes, and let themselves meditate on the best things they heard during the day, or they turned to their Bibles for spiritual refreshment.

Of the first groups described, most are now nervous, over-busy, anxious women, even those who are well provided with worldly wealth. Of the other group, many are quiet, happy, accomplishing, inspiring women.

The habit of being calm in the midst of duties is a masterful habit, keeps the soul above too much dust and friction, gives time for mental poise and spiritual refreshment.—Wellspring.

How Prayers Are Answered (116).

What place has prayer for temporal blessings in your system of natural law in the spiritual world? This question was asked of Henry Drummond. His reply was:

"A large, splendidly-equipped steamship sailed out from Liverpool for New York. Among the passengers were a little boy and girl, who were playing about the deck, when the boy

lost his ball overboard. He immediately ran to the captain, and shouted, 'Stop the ship, my ball is overboard!' The captain smiled pleasantly, but said, 'Oh, no, my boy! I cannot stop the ship with all these people, just to get a rubber ball.' The boy went away grumbling, and confided to the little girl that the captain didn't stop the ship because he couldn't. He believed the ship was wound up some way in Liverpool, and she just had to run, day and night, until she ran down. A day or so afterwards, the children were playing on deck again, when the little girl dropped her doll down into the engine-room, and she supposed it, too, had gone overboard. She said, 'I will run and ask the captain to stop the ship and get my dolly.' 'It's no use,' said the boy; 'he cannot do anything, I've tried him.' But the little girl ran on to the captain with her story and appeal. The captain came and peeked down into the engine-room, and seeing the doll, said, 'Just wait here a minute.' And, while the ship went right on, he ran down the stairway and brought up the little girl's doll, to her delight and to the boy's amazement.

"The next day the cry rang out, 'Man overboard!' and immediately the bell rang in the engine-room, by orders from the lever in the hands of the captain; the great ship stood still until boats were lowered and the life was rescued. Then she steamed on until she reached her wharf in New York. As soon as the ship was tied up, the captain went up town and bought the boy a better ball than the one he had lost. Now, each of the three prayers were answered. The little girl received her request without stopping the ship; the little boy, by a little waiting, received his also; and yet, for sufficient reason the ship was stopped by a part of the machinery itself, not as an afterthought, but something put into the ship when it was made."—Daily Bible.

"Effectual Prayer" (117).

Dwight L. Moody was a passenger on the imperiled steamship "Spree," when, in the midst of a severe storm in November, the main shaft broke and plunged through the bottom of the vessel. Her stern was sunk so deep that the bow towered above the water. A prayer meeting was held. General O. O. Howard, one of the passengers, says: "It was a most impressive gathering. Jews, Catholics and all others forgot their religious differences. Moody read Psa. 91 and Psa. 107, offered a most fervent prayer, and made a short address. God heard and answered. I

went to my stateroom and was asleep when someone touched me. I awoke to find a fond little German girl, the daughter of one of the passengers, by my cot. 'The steamer is coming,' she said, and then added, in broken English, 'Hallelujah.'" Of the rescue, Moody says: "There was never a more earnest prayer to God than of those seven hundred souls who met in the saloon to implore God's help. God answered us and sent a rescuing ship. It was the grandest test of prayer I ever knew. My son was with me. He is a student at Yale, and had some doubts about God's direct interference in answer to prayer. The boy couldn't rest. We were fast drifting out of the track of vessels, and our peril was extreme. About two o'clock he came and awoke me, telling me to come on deck. There he pointed out an occasional glimpse of a tiny light that showed over the waves as our ship rolled from side to side. 'It is our star of Bethlehem,' he cried, 'and our prayers are answered.' Before daylight the 'Huron,' whose mast-head light it was, had reached us, and the waves were stilled and the winds were hushed by divine command, while we were drawn out of the direst peril to this safe haven."—Augsburg Teacher.

The Mystery of Prayer (119).

It is sometimes urged that prayer is mysterious. So is everything, if we stop to think about it. Matter is a mystery. Nobody knows what matter is. Force is a mystery. Nobody knows what force is. Gravitation is a mystery. Nobody knows what gravitation is.

Nobody knows what takes place when we drop a lump of sugar into a cup of coffee. Whether the change is mechanical or chemical the very wisest men are not able to say.

We know just one thing, that by dropping sugar into the coffee the coffee is sweetened. For most of us that is enough. We know that by dropping a prayer into a day we sweeten the day. How that is brought about we do not know. Who has sight so keen and strong that it can follow the flight of song or flight of prayer?

Why should we not be as reasonable and practical in our religion as we are at the dinner-table?—Charles E. Jefferson.

SERVICE IX.

The Companionship of Christ.
Psalm 139: 18.

"When I awake I am still with thee."
Lesson:—Psalm 23.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. Friendships are life's greatest boons.
2. Christ's friendship is offered us.
3. He is an (1) ever-present; (2) all-powerful, and (3) all-wise friend.
4. This means (1) rare privileges of fellowship, (2) counsel, (3) guidance, (4) protection.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Ever Present. (121)—Are you a disciple of the Lord Jesus? If so, he says to you, "I am with you alway." That overflows all the regrets of the past and all the possibilities of the future, and most certainly includes the present. Therefore, at this very moment, as surely as our eyes rest on this page, so surely is the Lord Jesus with you. "I am" is neither "I was," nor "I will be." It is always abreast of our lives, always encompassing us with salvation. It is a splendid, perpetual "now."—Frances Ridley Havergal.

On the Rock. (122)—The changes which come to us both in character and in environment are numerous and momentous. Instability seems the law of life, to all who are content to occupy the earthly standpoint only. But our Christian faith affords a steady counteractive to pessimism. Our Lord has brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel, and is himself the one evidence of it which is abiding and incontrovertible. All those who rest their hopes on his teaching and personality have a right to feel like men who, having escaped the quicksands which threatened to engulf them, now stand on the rock which towers aloft beyond the range of moving sands and of the restless sea.—Alfred Rowland, D. D.

Following Him. (123)—To follow Christ is to become like him. To serve him is to carry out his spirit into all the relations of our lives. This can not be done without a daily dying to self, the giving up of a multitude of things in themselves not sinful,

not evil, but good, because we have a larger plan of life, a higher purpose of existence—namely, the establishment among men of Christ's kingdom of truth, righteousness and joy. How we shall work for it is determined by the conditions of our lives, and also by our use of these conditions—for by faithfulness we may measurably change them, institute new relations, broaden our range of influence, create opportunities, make renunciations of certain modes of service easy, by rising to larger and better planes. If there is sacrifice in such a life, it is for us the only true life—if there is a cross in it, it is a cross to be gloried in—if it leads to death—death is but the angel that swings open the portals of heaven's triumphs.—Egbert Smyth.

God With Us. (124)—The comfort is that we can look to God, and say with the psalmist, "When I awake, I am still with Thee." God is with us in our sorest duty. God is with us in our heaviest sorrow. God is with us in our humblest task, if only it be valiantly done. And this is the joy of it when we awake, that through all we strive to do, and all we bear, God and his grace become more wonderful than in the earlier morning when we dreamed.—Rev. G. H. Morrison.

What We Lack. (125)—Not only is he a friend that can be trusted in every emergency, but he is a friend who will be true to us. He will not flatter when censure is more deserving. He will not extoll our virtues and hide our faults. The rich young ruler who could say "all these commandments have I observed from youth up" received his reward in the smile of love and approval as Jesus "looked upon him and loved him"; but he also received just reproof from these same loving lips when the Master said: "One thing thou lackest: go sell that thou hast and give to the poor and come, follow me." He loved his gold and silver more than he did his God, and this was his sin which Jesus faithfully rebukes while loving him for his virtues.

He tells us in his Word that all have sinned; that means that all men are sinners. Whatever our virtues may be there is one thing lacking in every one. We have sinned and the guilt of sin is upon our hearts. We love something else more than we love our God. We may not like to be told that we are sinners, especially if some of us can boast of our natural goodness with all truthfulness, but it remains a fact all the same

that there is something vital lacking, and Jesus would not be a true friend if he did not tell us of it.—P. A. Tinkham.

Communion. (126)—He will come into the solitude in which the soul dwells, and make the darkness bright with his presence, and break the monotonous silence with words of love. We have him only to speak to; he alone can understand us He will rejoice with us when we rejoice, and weep with us when we weep. The heart knoweth its own bitterness; God knows it, too; and though a stranger can not intermeddle with its joy, he whose temple and dwelling place is the soul that loves him is no stranger, but the soul's most intimate and only friend.—R. W. Dale.

Choosing God. (127)—A man who might carve statues and paint pictures, spending his life in making mock flowers out of wax and paper, is wise compared with the man who might have God for company and yet shuts God out and lives an empty life. —Phillips Brooks.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Life Without Christ (128).

"I dreamed I was in a churchyard at midnight. Overhead I heard the thunder of distant avalanches and beneath my feet the first footfalls of a boundless earthquake. Lightnings gleamed athwart the church windows and the lead and iron frames melted and rolled down. Christ appeared and all the dead cried out, 'Is there no God?' And Christ answered, 'There is none. I have traversed the worlds, I have risen to the suns, with the milky ways I have passed athwart the great waste spaces of the sky; there is no God. And I descended to where the very shadow cast by Being dies out and ends, and I gazed out into the gulf beyond and cried, Father, where art thou? But answer came none, save the eternal storm which rages on. We are orphans all, both I and you. We have no Father.' Then the universe sank and became a mine dug in the face of the black eternal night besprent with thousand suns. And Christ cried, 'Oh, mad, unreasoning Chance; knowest thou—thou knowest not—where thou dost march, hurricane-winged, amid the whirling snow of stars, extinguishing sun after sun on thy onward way, and when the sparkling dew of constellations ceases to gleam, as thou dost pass by? How every soul in this great corpse-trench of a universe is utterly alone?' And I fell down and peered into the shining mass of worlds, and beheld the coil

of the great Serpent of eternity twined about those worlds; these mighty coils began to writhe, and then again they tightened and contracted, folding around the universe twice as closely as before; they wound about all nature in thousand folds and crashed the worlds together. And all grew narrow and dark and terrible. And then a great immeasurable bell began to swing and toll the last hour of time and shatter the fabric of the universe, when my sleep broke up and I awoke. And my soul wept for joy that it could still worship God—my gladness and my weeping and my faith, these were my prayer."—Jean Paul Richter's "Dream of a World Without God."

The Burden Bearer (129).

But there are some burdens that we cannot bear, some that Christ does not intend that we should bear. He has come to bear them for us. "A station agent at Bloomington, N. J., saw a man walking on the tracks of the Lehigh Valley Railroad. On his back he carried a huge pack. He seemed tired, but trudged on steadily. The agent stopped him and ordered him off the tracks, telling him that he was liable to arrest for trespass. The man, who was a Hungarian, demurred and produced a railroad ticket good from Jersey City to Scranton, Pa. The agent looked at him in amazement, and upon inquiry found that the Hungarian thought his ticket only gave him the privilege of walking over the road. So with many Christians, they toil through life bearing burdens, despite the fact that Christ has promised to bear our burdens and our care, if we will but cast our care on him."—Standard Commentary.

The Captain (130).

I once made a voyage across the Atlantic, in which the weather was so pleasant and all things ran so easily that I suspect the most of us felt about equal to the captain, and concluded it was no great thing to run a steamer, after all. But when a great storm struck us as we passed Cape Race, and all night long the good ship shuddered and panted through the wild waters, and when, next morning, peering deckward, we saw the faithful fellow standing by the mainmast, watching it with steady eyes, alert and cheerful, though he had been on deck all night, turning his ship round in the teeth of the tempest and the trough of the sea, so that she might escape the awful strain and the avalanche of waters which were filling men with dismay, then we knew our captain. The reserves were coming out. That

man had light in him and life equal to the demand—oil, in a word, in the vessel with his lamp, and so he brought the good ship, at last, to her haven, and won the "Well done."—Robert Collyer, D.D

Our Guide (131).

As my guide climbed the mountain he carried a hatchet and cut gashes in the trees here and there along the way. That is called "blazing," and it marks out the path for the next time. There are few wildernesses now that are not traversed by many blazed paths. Moreover, every step I took in following my guide I was wearing away the moss and underbrush and packing the ground, and helping, though ever so little, to make a distinct path for those that would come after me.

And that is what every follower of our heavenly Guide is doing in this world—helping to make a path that will make the next Christian's "walk and conversation" easier and safer.—Amos R. Wells.

God Carries Our Burdens (132).

God will carry us and our burdens, too. An aged, weary woman, carrying a heavy basket, got into the train with me the other day, and when she was seated she still kept the heavy burden upon her arm. "Lay your burden down, mum," said the kindly voice of a workingman. "Lay your bundle down, mum; the train will carry both it and you."—J. H. Jowett.

The Keeper of the Fortress (133).

Is the soul a fortress? Yes; it is like old Thebes with its hundred gates, and every gate gives access to the foe, and at all of them together, if the Prince of the power of the air chooses, and assault may be made. Many of us have wide gates open to sin, great tendencies and propensities toward uncleanness, passionate temper and capricious jealousy; but God knows, and when we commit the keeping of our soul to him, we are committing it to one who best understands it, because he has made it—made it with all its possibilities, with its frailty, exposed to all the insidious recoil of heredity. He best can keep it.

Give Christ the Best Place (134).

When Raphael's great picture, the "Sistine Madonna," was first brought to Dresden it was displayed in the castle in the presence of the king. It was brought into the throne room, but the most favorable spot in the room was occupied by the throne

itself. The king, taking in the situation, pushed the throne to one side, saying, "Make room for the immortal Raphael." The first place and the best place belong to him.—Sunday School Journal.

A Warm Heart Needed (135).

Only a heart can warm and satisfy a heart. For comfort press your heart close to the heart of Jesus. Do you have a tendency to self-complacency, and is it hard for you to realize that in the sight of God you are a sinner? Then get closer to Jesus. If one is simply trying to conform to a law, he may become as righteous as the rich young ruler who declared he had kept every one of the commandments. But if one is trying to be worthy of the friendship of a person so incomparably noble and exalted as Jesus there will come moments when he will cry out with Peter, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord," and when he will fall down in the dust with Paul, declaring himself to be the chief of sinners.—Jefferson.

All Else In Christ (136).

He that hath God for his portion shall have all other things cast into his store, as packthread is cast into the bargain, or as an handful of corn is cast into the corn you buy, or as hucksters cast in an over-cast among the fruits you buy, or as an inch of measure is given into an ell of cloth. Plutarch's reasoning is good; friends have all things in common; God is our friend; ergo, we cannot want; a rare speech from a heathen. Hath God given you those spiritual riches that infinitely exceed and excel all the richest rubies and pearls in the world, and will he deny you a little money in your purse to bear your charges till you come to heaven? Hath he given you a crown, and will he deny you a crust? Hath he given you his robes, and will he deny you a few rags?—Matchless Portion.

Calvary (137).

"Look ye up to Calvary's hill,
Ye who bear the pains of ill;
Look ye towards Ascension Mount,
Ye who drink the bitter fount;
Look ye towards the gates of Morn,
Ye who wear the twisted thorn!"

—E. H. Sears.

SERVICE X.

Otherworldliness.

1 John 2:15.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Lesson:—1 John 2:14-25.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Contending forces**—heaven and earth—man's soul the stake.

2. **Worldliness**: passionate absorption in the things of time and sense.

3. **Otherworldliness**: enjoying this life, but ever subordinating it to the higher life.

4. **Life is reiterated choice** between these two. The result is character, destiny.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Pleasure or Peace. (139)—Think of the result of existence in the man or woman who has lived chiefly to gratify the physical appetites—think of its real emptiness, its real repulsiveness when old age comes and the senses are dulled and the roses have faded and the lamps at the banquet are smoking and expiring and desire fails, and all that remains is the fierce, insatiable, ugly craving for delights which have fled for evermore; think of the bitter, burning vacancy of such an end, and you must see that pleasure is not a good haven to seek in the voyage of life.—Henry Van Dyke.

Worry Not. (140)—How like a fanatic Jesus speaks when he says: "Therefore, take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" the reader expects him to say, as fanatics have said many a time, that we can do without these things; but how magnanimous are the words of which he makes use instead, "For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." He says, indeed, "Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow"; but the reason is a happy one; the morrow will be equal to its own needs, if we do not weaken the mind beforehand by borrowing tomorrow's trouble, and thereby spoiling today. Every day has its own task and, therefore, its own cares;

but a cheerful and trustful mind will be equal to its burden.—Alexander Maclaren.

Self-control. (141)—The clamor of passion upsets our quiet sense of truth and right. Self-interest brings in conflicting echoes. And that is how some of the disasters in life arise. For no truth is more rudimentary, as none is apt to be less familiar, than this, that sound practical judgment is rooted deep in a man's character, and that the moral qualities of unselfishness and sincerity tell heavily in favor of sagacity in life's affairs. Oftener than we realize, perhaps, people break down and go wrong, not so much from an imperfect knowledge of the route or direction, as because at the outset the balance of their judgment has secretly been shaken by some fault like selfishness, or the love of pleasure, or moral obstinacy. The undisciplined man is his own worst enemy. His lack of self-control is a worse mischief to him than any defect of worldly wisdom.—Dr. James Moffatt.

Self-denial. (142)—There are people who tell us that man is wholly made by his environment; that each human being is just the result of his training and circumstances; that his moral and religious condition is determined altogether by the accidents of his birth and besettings; that we are honest and pure, pious and orthodox, or just the reverse, according to the sphere in which we have played our part, and the influences which have given us breath and nourishment; that, in fact, we are just pieces of plastic clay with no credit or discredit attaching for the shape we take. That notion is utterly immoral and demoralizing. It is the excuse of the sluggish, the self-indulgent, and the wicked. It is a denial of will-power, of moral responsibility. It is a shutting out of God. And yet it becomes true enough where the mind is indolent, where the heart has no earnest purpose, and where life is lived on easy terms.—Rev. J. J. Greenbough.

Indulgence Handicaps. (143)—It is said that the painter Landseer deteriorated woefully under the influence of the fashionable set that feted him and paid high prices for his pictures after he had become famous. The student who means to go far must give up many of the pleasures in which his comrades take part, if he is to win all the honors upon which he has set his heart; and by the time he has attained them he will find frivolous things insipid and even odious. Whatever distracts and weakens the power of concentration must be shunned. Great

surgeons and great musicians have to use the utmost care, so that they may maintain an even nerve-life, and by temporary abuse or neglect of their art may lose a fine and patiently-acquired deftness of touch. They cannot afford to go the pace with their roystering neighbors till heart is strained and hands tremble. All faculties of delicacy and special subtleness must be guarded with unsleeping conscientiousness. Is divine life a coarser gift, which may thrive without the fastidious precautions men use to keep their fitness in the higher secular vocations? Does it need no vigilant safeguards, no watchful nurture, no sagacious oversight? Is it immune from harm in the vitiated atmospheres of our modern Babylons? In what is described as a sour-souled, stiff-lipped Puritanism there is often the wisdom accruing from long observation and costly experiment.—Rev. T. J. Selby.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

"Earth Earthy" (144).

Monte Carlo is at the southern extreme of France and upon the border land of Italy. It is the great gambling spot of earth. Once in the gambling hall, a veritable palace of dreamy beauty, the atmosphere is as of the lost world, if one can conceive of what it is like. Though we entered the hall early in the evening, every table was full, where men and women (mostly women) sat—young, middle-aged, and very old—all intent upon what slot the marble would fall in when the ring of fortune went whirling on its way. Piles of money—silver, gold, and paper money—lay here and there; while on "squares" on the gambling tables were arranged the "betting money," ready to win or to be won. The "bank," as the men who represent the institution are called, rake in with little wooden rakes the money that men and women have put down and lost in the turn of the wheel. Old women, with fingers glittering with rings and trembling with excitement in every nerve, lean over these tables and take chances along with more thoughtless and unconcerned young women, who play with an air of more indifference.

One young woman, a Catholic, was much concerned on the voyage because she had by some mistake eaten turtle soup, which she was not sure could be classed with fish. I saw, among others at Monte Carlo, this young woman at the gambling table, venturing a ten-dollar chance, which she lost. "Do you think I

would come to Monte Carlo and not take a game?" she said.—Rev. J. O. Knott in The Christian Advocate.

"Passeth Away" (145).

All past history teaches us that mere material gain unaccompanied by moral and spiritual worth has no lasting value. Edwin Markham has well said:

Voices are crying from the ruins of Tyre,
From Karnak and the stones of Babylon,
Saying we raised our pillars on self-desire
And so perished from the large gaze of the sun.

A grandeur came down from the Pyramids,
A glory come on Greece, a light on Rome;
But in them all the ancient traitor hid,
And so they perished like momentary foam.

There was no substance in their soaring hopes·
The voice of Thebes is but a desert cry;
A spider bars the way with filmy ropes
Where once the fleet of Carthage thundered by.

A bittern cries where once Queen Dido laughed;
A thistle nods where once the forum roared;
A lizard lifts and listens on a shaft
Where once of old the Coliseum poured.

—J. W. Lee, D. D.

A High Spiritual Purpose (146).

The traveler in South China may see, in the spring of the year, files of coolies, employed by the Chinese fish-cultivators to carry the newly-hatched fry across the watershed dividing the Canton North and East rivers from each other. The journey is more than a hundred miles in length, and for two or three days and nights the porters scarcely allow themselves rest or sleep. Every hour they stay for a few minutes to change the water in which the tiny fish are placed. When other wayfarers are crowding into the inns for the night they hurry on through the darkness, with scarcely an interval for food. The hurrying coolies are in charge of life passing through a stage of acute sensitiveness, and they are wise in their generation. And must not vital godliness in the soul be guarded by methods suited to the stages through which it is passing?

SERVICE XI.

Christ's Ministry to the Multitude; and Ours.

Matthew 15: 32.

"I have compassion on the multitude."

Lesson:—Matthew 15: 29-38.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. Christ is our **Example** as well as our Saviour.
2. This applies to **his attitude toward others.** It was one of (1) kindly **interest,** (2) loving **sympathy,** (3) gracious **ministry.**
3. The noblest life is the one which **reproduces these characteristics from love to Christ and man.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Friendliness. (148)—A friendly hand on the shoulder of John B. Gough made a man of him, and put sunshine into untold thousands of homes.

"It was only a glad 'Good-morning,'
As she passed along the way;
But it spread the morning's glory
Over the livelong day."

It was a little thing, so easy for any of us to do, and so much needed, and yet we didn't do it. Somebody has said that, if we don't take joy to heaven with us we won't find it there, and I have no doubt it is true. In this world we have to give to get, and I don't know of any good reason why it shouldn't be that way in the next. It doesn't take many notes to make a melody, and yet so many of us never sing the little song we might,

"The wounds I might have healed,
The human sorrow and smart!
And yet it never was in my soul
To play so ill a part.
But evil is wrought by want of thought
As well as want of heart."
—"The Raven and the Chariot."

Love Spontaneous. (149)—The bond of love is not a mere contact with conscience to pay the nominal debt of human duty. The obligation is compulsory, but the compulsion does not arise

out of intrinsic pressure; the inmost soul generates it, Christ being there. In working toward the Christian life and love we are but opening the door to let in the power which shall complete what we can only imperfectly long for. Unselfishness is the other name for love; when love comes in self goes out, and then the whole field of duty becomes a field of joy. In serving others we accomplish the most ennobling mission of human life.—The Independent.

Kindness Melts. (150)—During the early stages of the Transvaal war, in one of the field hospitals an Englishman and a Boer lay only a few beds from each other. Both had lost their right arm. The nurse gave the Englishman a pipe of tobacco. As he received it, his eye caught sight of the Boer, and instantly he saw that he was longing for a pipe also. He called the nurse, and, handing back the pipe, said, "Give it to him." The Boer took it, was melted by the sympathy shown, and the tears streamed down his face. The Englishman was much moved and cried also. The nurse, looking on, wept with them both. What a wonderful solvent sympathy was there; how it made enemies friends, and made three hearts as one.

Sympathy Costs. (151)—There can be no sympathy without the sympathizer undergoing pangs. There must be an agony of one's soul corresponding to the agony of the soul of another, or sympathy does not exist. Perhaps no man is more useful to a community than the one whose soul is large enough and sensitive enough to feel the darts that are thrust through the souls of others. Sympathy links a man to other men and makes him one of them. He becomes a part of humanity rather than remaining the whole of an insignificant part of humanity. He enters into that great body made of one blood, without regard to race or color. He is ready always to extend a helping hand because his responsive heart beats in sympathy with the heart of need. He calculates what his companions want, if he is not able to discern it by an intuition of nature. The recognition of need immediately calls forth a supply for the need.

Strength of Burdens. (152)—That is the mystery of grace, that the burdens of a selfish man are lightened by adding more. "Take my yoke upon you." And what yoke is that, Lord? "The yoke of other people's needs—the burdens of the blind and the deaf, and the lame and the lepers—the burdens of other folks' sorrows; put them on to thy shoulders; take my yoke upon thee

—increase thy burden, and thy burden shall become light, and instead of weariness thou shalt find rest."—J. H. Jowett.

Lightening Burdens. (153)—"She always made things easier" was the tribute given a little while ago to a quiet woman not much known outside the four walls of her household and in a charity or two, but who left an aching void behind her when she passed on into large life. No one who knew her could help recognizing the simple completeness of the statement. From her husband to her housemaid everyone in the family felt his or her daily way smoothed and straightened by her tact and system and gentleness. She was a living example of George Eliot's saying: "What do we live for if it is not to make life less difficult for one another?" To some perhaps this seems a small end to live for. Yet that it is so often approached makes the hope and the happiness of home. Life is increasingly difficult, increasingly complex in many communities today. The husband, the children, the friends of the woman who "make things easier" more and more rise up and call her blessed. Her work is worth living for, because it continually makes every life within its influence seem better worth living. And when she is gone—how rugged the way, how heavy the burden without her gentle ministry! We hear a great deal nowadays about the "superfluous" woman. Some branches of woman's work may be overcrowded; but never, never, surely, the high vocation of the smoother of the way.—Harper's Bazar.

Friendship. (154)—But after all, the very best thing in good talk, and the thing that helps it most, is friendship. How it dissolves the barriers that divide us, and loosens all constraint, and diffuses itself like some fine old cordial through all the veins of life—the feeling that we understand and trust each other, and wish each other heartily well! Everything into which it really comes is good. It transforms letter-writing from a task into a pleasure. It makes music a thousand time more sweet. The people who play and sing not at us, but to us—how delightful it is to listen to them!—Rev. Henry Van Dyke.

Helpfulness. (155)—It was written of Edward Everett Hale, "The central purpose of his life was to help; the dominant chord in his nature is compassion. The secret is dropped in his address to the Literary Society in 1871. "Noblesse oblige," he says, "our privilege compels us; we professional men must serve the world, not, like the handicraftsman, for a price accurately representing

the work done, but as those that deal with infinite values and confer benefits as freely and nobly as nature."

Compassion. (156)—Christianity, indeed, puts such supreme value on the soul that it seems sometimes to overlook the body. Yet its true spirit comes out in the combined care for both. It emphasizes the worth of the immortal being, man, and the consequent moment of everything belonging to that being. There is no side-proof of its Divine origin, of its universal human fitness, to which it can more confidently appeal than this; that it has done more for the physical nature of man, for his present improvement, for his bodily relief and welfare than any other religion "More" is too feeble an expression. Ask Paganism at its best in the history of civilized Greece and Rome. Ask Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Confucianism in the present. Where are their asylums, their hospitals, their reformatories, their dispensaries and charitable institutions? Nowhere. This word of Jesus, "I have compassion on the multitude," is the seed-plot of all the philanthropy of modern civilization.—Laidlaw.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Christ's Sympathetic Insight (157).

Copious and unfailing rivers run just beneath the burning desolations of the Sahara. Twenty or thirty feet under the sand-drifts there is an impervious sheet of rock which prevents the escape of the collected rain-waters. It is easy to see the oasis, but not so easy to track the windings of the hidden river. The skilled engineer can get at the river, bring it up through his wells, and change the desert into an earthly paradise. Society at large is not the dreary, all-devouring, illimitable ethical waste we often imagine. The rivers of God flow under natures we call reprobate, and create penitential moods which are the earnest of a coming righteousness. It is easy to map out the strips of moral fruitfulness which appear here and there in the world, but not so easy to find the deep secret contrition of those who are often classed as abandoned outcasts. The Saviour of the world has an insight into character which enables him to see promise where men less sympathetic and discerning see the black marks of reprobation; and the angels share the visions of the Lord on whom they wait. It is by his art, as the Prophet of coming good, that the desert is made to bloom.—Rev. J. G. Selby.

Discerning Hidden Beauties (158).

The late Mr. Armour was once remonstrated with for helping a certain young man who seemed not worth the aid given him. "Oh, well," replied Mr. Armour genially, "I don't suppose we have struck pay-dirt in him yet; but there is a streak of gold somewhere, or he could not do even these two or three decent things that he has done. You know it takes an awful sight of moral power for some of us to be even decent." Jesus had the power of finding the "streak of gold" in others. He found "pay-dirt" in this woman, and developed the "streak of gold," so that she became a soul-wining convert.—The Sunday School Times.

The Spirit of Ministry (159).

Writing of the siege of Vicksburg, General Grant says: "As soon as our troops took possession of the city, guards were established along the whole line of parapet, from the river above to the river below. The men of the two armies fraternized as if they had been fighting for the same cause. When they passed out of the works they had so long and so gallantly defended between lines of their late antagonists, not a cheer went up, not a retort was made that would give pain. Really, I believe there was a feeling of sadness just then in the breasts of most of the Union soldiers, at seeing the dejection of their late antagonists."

Scatter Blessings (160).

Mary's ointment was wasted when she broke the vase and poured it upon her Lord. Yes; but suppose she had left the ointment in the unbroken vase? What remembrance would it then have had? Would there have been any mention of it on the gospel pages? Would her deed of careful keeping have been told all over the world? She broke the vase and poured it out, lost it, sacrificed it, and now the perfume fills all the earth. We may keep our life if we will, carefully preserving it from waste; but we shall have no reward, no honor from it at the last. But if we empty it out in loving service, we shall make it a lasting blessing to the world, and we shall be remembered forever.—J. R. Miller, D. D

Loving Ministry (161).

Jesus will reward those who give only a cup of cold water to a little one.

There is a very delightful example of this in a story told of John Falck, of Weimar, and his orphan boys. Before their simple meals they always said:

"Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest,
Bless the food Thou hast given us."

One little fellow said, "Father (so they called John Falck), you always ask Jesus to come as our guest, but he never comes. May I not set a chair for him?" "Yes," Falck replied. The chair was set. Just then there was a knock and outside stood a little ragged boy, shivering in the cold. He took the vacant chair. To him was given the bread and milk. Then the boy said, "Father, Jesus could not come, and so he sent this little boy in his place."

Sacrificing Self for Others (162).

He was a little New York newsboy. They found him one day lying on the street worn out and probably dying. The physician who examined him at the hospital said that his condition was due to hard work and lack of proper food. The kind friend who went behind the scenes and hunted up the facts in the case found that the lad was a true hero. His father had been taken away, leaving the mother with several brothers and sisters all younger than himself. What would become of them now? "I'll take care of you all," he said with a courage born out of the love of a pure heart, and out into the street he went to keep his word by selling papers. Surely this little life was not given in vain.

If we were only willing to make these sacrifices of self for the sake of those about us, can we doubt that we would win heaven's richest blessings? God can take the poorest service we can offer and transform it into beauty.

SERVICE XII.

Growth In Grace.

2 Peter 3:18.

"But grow in grace."

Lesson:—2 Peter 3:8-18.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **The Christian life a growth.** Snowballs increase by accretion; plant-life by growth.

2. **Favorable conditions essential.** Fellowship with Christ in (1) His **Word,** (2) **Prayer,** (3) **Service.**

3. **Our responsibility** for providing the conditions.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Growth. (163)—Growth is necessary for service. The little child becomes serviceable only as it matures into manhood or womanhood. Suppose a restraining power were suddenly laid upon each of these little ones, and growth were stopped,—what would be the results? Why, there would not be any. Give them their natural growth, and you cannot begin to estimate their possibilities for service, good or bad. Here is a young boy laid in an open grave, and we say, "A wonderfully bright boy gone." Yes, and we can say with equal truthfulness, "A man laid low." When we destroy a bud, we destroy a rose also. We plant the seed, we reap later on the harvest. Why? Because the rain and sunshine from heaven bring forth life and growth, and therefore something serviceable.—John Willis Baer.

True Virtue. (164)—What the world calls virtue is a name and dream without Christ. The foundation of all human excellence must be laid deep in the blood of the Redeemer's cross, and in the power of his Resurrection. First, let a man know that all his past is wrong and sinful; then let him fix his eye on the love of God in Christ loving him,—even him, the guilty one. Is there no strength in that? no power in the knowledge that all that is gone by is gone, and that a fresh, clear future is open? It is not the progress of virtue that God asks for, but progress in saintliness, empowered by hope and love.—F. W. Robertson.

Drop at a Time. (165)—Have you ever noticed how an icicle is formed? If you have, you noticed how it froze one drop at a time until it was a foot or more long. If the water

was clear, the icicle remained clear, and sparkled almost as brightly as diamonds in the sun; but if the water was slightly muddy, the icicle looked foul, and its beauty was spoiled. Just so our characters are forming—one little thought or feeling at a time. If each thought be pure and right, the soul will be lovely and sparkle with happiness; but if impure and wrong, there will be deformity and wretchedness.—The Young Evangelist.

Growing Like Him. (166)—Superficial and false standards of Christian character will continue to prevail unless the character of Christ be carefully and constantly studied and imitated. Beholding him we become transformed into his likeness. But the process of transformation is not a formal copying, not an external imitation. It is a vital process in the heart by the agency of his Spirit. We cannot copy him unless he quickens us; he will not quicken us unless it be our aim to copy him. His inward life is the power that transforms us into his image, from glory to glory. A consistent, beautiful, powerful Christian life is possible to all who will study his character that they may copy it, and who seek to be filled with his Spirit that by it they may be inwardly transformed.

(167) Progress in the development of Christian character and progress in Christian achievement depend upon individual choice. As at each stage of the growth of a tree winter leaves are formed, and at each stage winter leaves are dropped, so at each stage in the growth of Christian character old things must be permitted to pass away, new and lofty resolves must be made. "This one thing I do" reveals the ardent determination, the persistent industry, and the tireless zeal of the great apostle. His thought was concentrated on the part of his race that was yet to be run.

Growing in Grace. (168)—Spiritual growth is a living act—I can not originate or force it. I may encourage and help it, by prayer, by self-denial, by Christian work, by meditation and communion with the word; but like the lily, all my growth must be the legitimate result of life within me, which life was a divine impartation. I supply the conditions that encourage growth in my boy, but I may not presume to force its growth by telling him to do it. He grows the best who hath the least need to think about it, and therefore, without trying, grows. He can not grow by trying. So in the spiritual life, we can not force growth or fruitfulness. Spiritual growth is spiritual life unfold-

ing itself from the divine germ planted within the soul by the Holy Spirit, the source of life, and then growing naturally and easily as the flower from seed or bud. The germ of life in the hidden seed may be hindered from growth by unfriendly conditions, as cold, or drought, or fungus spores that shut it in and poison its life. Remove these, and then, without effect, it grows. So the germ of spiritual life will find hindering conditions in the heart unsanctified; these removed, then abide, "rooted and grounded in him," and grow. Do not try to do it, nor worry about it. Just abide in faith and conscious dependence, and obedient trust and love, and you will grow.—Rev. John Parker.

God Knows. (169)—Life is more of a struggle with some men than with others. Here is a man who is well born, well educated. His environment has been good. Before him the sea is smooth and the gales are favorable. He is held in high esteem because no marked fault is seen in his record or his character.

There is another man not so well born, not so well educated, with unfavorable environment; the sea on which he is sailing is boisterous, and the winds are against him. It is entirely supposable that, though greater faults may mark this man's record than that of the other man, he is the more virtuous of the two. God knows what a struggle it costs him every day to be as good as he is. He has more of a conflict each day than the other man ever dreamed of.—From "The Changeless Christ."

Growth by Cultivation. (170)—Growth will not take care of itself. Professor Henry Drummond, early in life, taught that it would. He said, "The soul grows as the lily grows, without trying, without ever thinking about it." But, later on, he saw that he had made a very serious mistake, that natural laws would not apply to the spiritual world as completely as he had imagined, that the analogy of the plant is deceptive and defective when pressed in all respects upon creatures with free will and personal responsibility. The plant is helpless in a way that man is not. It is a fundamental difference. There are hindrances to growth which we may remove; there are conditions of growth which we must fulfill; there are means of growth which it is incumbent upon us to use. So that if we fail to grow it will be distinctly our own fault.—"The Riches Of His Grace."

Food For Growth. (171)—What nutrition, then, are you giving to your spirit? Is it such as is likely to secure your growth? What do you read? Tell me what a man reads and

I will tell you his spiritual condition. Newspapers and magazines admirably serve their ends, but these ends are not spiritual nutrition. The Bible read carelessly and formally, so many verses a day, will work no charm any more than any other book so read. But the Bible read with expectation, interest, thought and personal application will yield nutriment of the most various and stimulating kind.—Marcus Dods.

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Endeavor Gives Strength (172).

"But I can't do half those things," said a bewildered new pupil to the teacher of physical culture, as they stood together in the gymnasium. "I simply can't do them at all."

"If you could there would be little use in your coming here," was the sensible reply. "You are here to learn how to do them; to train your limbs and muscles to strength and suppleness."

That is the story of life. We say we cannot do this thing, we cannot endure that, we are not strong to climb this ideal or to bear that burden, or to struggle successfully with the temptation and wrong that overmaster us so easily. What is the use of trying when we have failed again and again?

But that is just what we are here for—to learn how, through failure and mistake, to grow a little stronger by every endeavor, whether it end in foothold or fall. We are here to try, never to give up trying, and to gain spiritual strength and vigor by persistent struggle. It is not this rope caught or that weight lifted that counts; it is the strength gained by effort.—Pleasant Hours.

A Saint Who Grew (173).

There is a legend of a saint whose wonderful deeds astonished the angels, and they came to learn the secret of his piety. Everywhere the man went he diffused virtue as the flower gives out perfume, without being aware of it. The angels asked that the saint might be given the gift of miracles, and God consented. They asked the man if he would like by the touch of his hand to heal the sick. "No," he replied, "I would rather God should do that." "Then would you like to convert guilty souls and bring them back to right paths?" "No, it is the Spirit's mission to convert; I only pray." "Would you like to be a model of patience and draw men by your piety?" "No," said the saint, "if men were attracted to me, they might be estranged from

God." "What do you desire?" said the angels. "That God would give me his grace; that I might do a great deal of good without knowing it." The angels were perplexed. Finally they resolved that whenever the shadow of the man should fall where he could not see it, the shadow should cure disease and comfort sorrow. So it came to pass, as the saint passed along, the hearts of men were cheered wherever he walked.—The Hibbert Journal.

Discouraged Christians (174).

On a very slippery day, last winter, a young negro was making his way home with a large market basket on his arm, full to the brim with all those hard and ball-like vegetables peculiar to winter. Treading unwarily on a bit of glare ice, he came down suddenly, with a crash that emptied his basket out into the street. Surrounded by garden products, he lay at full length, his head supported on his hand, looking calmly about him. Seeing him still prostrate, a gentleman hurried to him anxiously, "Are you hurt?" "No." "Then why don't you get up?" " 'Taint worth while." A good many of us, having spilled out our little basket of plans and purposes in the street, are as absurd as was that colored man when we say that it is not worth while to continue the struggle because we have caught a fall and find ourselves momentarily confused. After all, this suggests one of the chief methods of keeping cheerful, and that is not to magnify trifling difficulties.

"Shy Bearers" (175).

There are certain kinds of trees known among orchardists as "shy-bearers." In a soil where other varieties produce heavy crops of the choicest fruit they yield only a few specimens—just enough to show that they are true to their name. We know what they are and know them only to learn not to depend upon them. And it is so in the church of Christ. There are many shy-bearers. What fruit they produce is well enough. But, alas, there is so little of it. These shy-bearers, however, are not like their namesakes in the nursery. They are not catalogued and classified according to their real nature. Oh, no, they are entered as trees that ought to bear abundantly, and hence by their perversity when tested they bring reproach upon him who labeled them. The Christian is entered on the catalogue of the Lord's vineyard as a tree of righteousness, and is expected to bring forth much fruit.—The Interior.

All Experiences May Help Growth (176).

God so governs and shapes all the circumstances of life that if we use them aright we may draw near to him here and prepare to be near him in the forever after. He longs for our love—our love, which is so feeble and faint, and yet so precious in his sight when we give it to him freely. And why does he so desire it? Ah, I have told you many times before—and yet we can not too often remember it—that it is because if we love him he can make us supremely happy! All that belongs to us, or occurs to us in life, is so ordered that we may find in it the means of putting far from us those obstructions of evil which prevent us from seeing him as he is and as he has revealed himself to us; for if we did but so see him, how could we fail to love him with the whole heart and soul?—Theophilus Parsons.

Growth Follows Fidelity to Details (177).

Some power making toward success that would be resistless—who, in all this power-thirsty race, would not eagerly cry out to possess such a gift? "It is talent," says one of the world's wise men. "It is genius," is the assertion of another, "combined with favorable circumstances." "Nay," says the Christ, with finality of truth, "it is faithfulness in little things. If thou art faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." . . .

Greatness in any direction is an accumulation of little faithfulnesses towering into sight of the world. Real accomplishment in any line comes as the coral reefs are built, by the deposit of one tiny cell of fidelity to duty upon another, till thousands of unnoticed fidelities form into visible greatness. An isolated instance of devotion to duty is like a single drop of rain. Days full of such stern fidelities are like the fall of rain, bringing the life to flower and fruitage. . . . Running a life by jerks of effort is a good deal like running a railway engine on a track in which some of the rails are missing here and there. It is all right when the track is good, but destructive accidents will be in evidence when the rails are wanting.

Unfaithful over the little things of the spiritual life, we find the greater things withheld. . . .

How useless is our pleading for conscious power in prayer, while we are unfaithful in the habit of prayer! A hasty word of morning prayer, a hurried prayer of the wearied lips at night

while the mind wanders! Only he who keeps in touch with God has either power or vision.

Absolute fidelity in the performance of all the duties that belong to a Christian—how much rarer it is than it should be.—Sunday School Times.

How the Lilies Grow (178).

We must not only grow in grace, but grow in God's ways, and under his fostering care. I understand better every day his meaning when he said, "Consider the lilies, how they grow. They toil not, neither do they spin." There is no effort there, and so with us it is rather a matter of letting ourselves grow. "No man by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature." All pulling and stretching will avail nothing. Interpose no barrier between yourselves and the benefits of his loving-kindness.

The Vine and the Branches (179).

There is no preparation for service like frequent secret fellowship with God. Jesus ever sought the mountain for prayer, that he might come down filled with new power. The Christian's work is not done in his own strength. And how can he get new supplies of power if he does not seek often the source of all his help? He can not gather up by one great effort a limitless store of spiritual manna against all the future. For the soul as for the body he must pray, "Give us this day our daily bread."

If the mountain-top experience is not followed by service in the plain soon it will become a dim and fading memory, with no power or blessing in it, leaving behind nothing but barren regrets.

Growth Divinely Influenced (180).

There is a striking analogy between an orchard and the true Christian church—which is not a monopoly of any single denomination. It is made up of "the faithful in Christ Jesus." Christians are simply converted sinners. They have turned to God under the drawing influence of the wondrous divine love; and the Holy Spirit is the author of their regeneration.

The attempt to take the supernatural out of our religion would be as fatal as the attempt to remove from the skies the light and the life-giving warmth of the sun. God's Word meets every minister as he enters his pulpit, and every teacher or parent who desires the conversion of a child with the emphatic

declaration—"With the Holy Spirit everything, without the Spirit nothing!" Every true Christian is "born of the Spirit." He is created anew in Christ Jesus. To the carnal heart sinning is as natural as breathing; the incontestable evidence that the heart is renewed and under a new Master is that it bears the fruits of the Spirit.—Cuyler.

SERVICE XIII.

The Father's Loving Heart.

I John 4:8.

"God is love."

Lesson:—Luke 15:11-32.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **The central truth** of God's nature is love.

2. **This love manifests itself** in (1) Redemption, (2) Nature, (3) Providence.

3. God relies on his revelation of his love to call forth **responsive love** in our hearts.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Motherhood. (181)—Kipling wrote:

"If I were hanged on the highest hill,
I know whose love would follow me still;
If I were drowned in the deepest sea,
I know whose tears would come down to me;
If I were damned in body and soul,
I know whose prayers would make me whole;
Mother o' mine, mother o' mine."

And what is this unquenchable love of motherhood but the impress of the Divine—a mark of our celestial lineage—the faint echo of

"A love which rises infinite degrees
Above the tenderness of human hearts?"

Why should we hesitate to judge God by what is divinest in ourselves?—Downes.

God's Own. (182)—The one thing whereby God reckons that he possesses a man at all is when his love falls upon that man's heart and soaks into it, and when there springs up in the heart a corresponding emotion and affection. The men who welcome the divine love that goes through the whole world seeking such to worship it and to trust it and to become its own, and who therefore lovingly yield to the loving divine will and take it for their law—these are the men whom he regards as his "portion" and "the lot of his inheritance." So that "God is mine" and "I am God's" are two ends of one truth. "I possess

him" and "I am possessed by him" are but the statement of one fact expressed from two points of view. In the one case you look upon it from above. In the other case you look upon it from beneath. All the sweet commerce of mutual surrender and possession which makes the joy of our hearts in friendship and in domestic life we have the right to lift up into this loftier region and find it in the last teaching of what makes the special bond of mutual possession between God and man.—Dr. Alexander Maclaren.

The True Father. (183)—Do you suppose that God is an inferior sort of a father? Do you suppose that there are impulses in us toward our children, or in our fathers toward us, that are not simply just the dim and the faded suggestions of nobler and diviner impulses of the father heart of God? Prayer in the sense of supplication for real things becomes a rational reality to men who believe in God in Jesus Christ.—Robert E. Speer.

"Our Father." (184)—God was no longer to be served as a remote unsympathetic Law-giver, but as a present Father, himself more devoted to the human cause than any human being could be. Christ brought to men a God they could cordially worship, and this he did mainly by living in ordinary human ways among average sinners and among the constant human miseries and needs.—Marcus Dods.

Come as Sons. (185)—Let us come to him in full confidence; not as beggars, who come in doubt, come seldom and unwillingly; but as his beloved children who in good confidence lift up their hands to a father.—Gustav Frenssen.

Christ leads to the Father. (186)—Christ comes telling us of—showing us the Father—in order to lead us home to our rest and true life in that Father. It is this transcedent Father who is the God that Jesus Christ proclaims and whose infinite love he reveals; a Father ever near us, the reality of whose all-environing Presence we only need to know in order to be moved to come to him in our own spirits and be at peace.—Walker.

The Powerful Father. (187)—Out of this divine enfolding comes endless security. They shall never perish.

With the warm grasp of God's hand round about them, they can challenge the whole creation. Sin may trouble them, but they belong more to God than they do to sin. Temptation may

beleaguer them, but God is nearer to them than temptation. The might of evil spirits may be strong, but God's hold is stronger. The valley of the shadow of death may be gloomy and sinister, but the rod and the staff of the Good Shepherd bring timely succor and gracious comfort into the dark ravine. The tenderness of the Shepherd grows upon us as life unfolds. We get wonderful glimpses of his love in the wilderness, but it is in the shelter of the fold and in the intimacy of a deepening fellowship that we discover the inexhaustible riches of his grace.—Rev. Thomas Phillips.

Purposes our Good. (188)—I think I know men and women who have hearts so good and kind; who are so ready to do what they can to make their own children happy, or to add to the happiness of any little child; that I should feel safe enough and sure enough in going, sinful, weary, to Almighty God, to ask for his mercy and his Blessed Spirit, even if I knew no more than this, that I should find such a welcome at his throne of grace as these good men and women would give to any suffering, helpless child, even if it were not their own. But "how much more!" What a silent reference to an inconceivable depth of love and pity in the heart of God! It is as if Christ had said to those whom he addressed, **You** cannot understand the difference; words cannot explain the difference; here is the kind of thing, in yourselves, but in God "how much more!" Yet not a different kind of thing; the same kind feeling you bear towards your children, only heightened up to a pitch you can never know. And then, what a silent suggestion in the hint of what we are, even at our very best: "If ye, being evil;" **that** is what we are at our very best, in the sight of God. The man who bears on his kind face the unmistakable signs of the kind heart within, that make little children (those unerring physiognomists) hail him on short acquaintance as a congenial friend,—that kind good man, after all, is nothing better than **evil** in the pure sight of God. Far kinder, purer, wiser, better, is the care for all his children which dwells with our heavenly father.—Boyd.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

God Was Stronger (189).

Wherever we find them they are still the same; whether in the courts of Japan or China; fighting Spaniards in the Pacific, or prisoners among the Algerines; founding colonies that were by and by to grow into enormous Transatlantic republics, or ex-

ploring in crazy pinnaces the fierce latitudes of the Polar seas—they are the same indomitable God-fearing men, whose life was one great liturgy. 'The ice was strong, but God was stronger,' says one of Frobisher's men, after grinding a night and a day among the icebergs; not waiting for God to come down and split the ice for them, but toiling through the long hours, himself and the rest fending off the vessel with poles and planks, with death glaring at them out of the rocks. Icebergs were strong, Spaniards were strong, and storms, and corsairs, and rocks, and reefs, which no chart had then noted—they were all strong; but God was stronger and that was all which they cared to know."—Froude, "England's Forgotten Worthies."

The Central Fact (190).

"God is Love!" This is his essential nature, and includes all other attributes. This is the ocean, call the bays and estuaries what you will. You speak of the German Ocean, and the English Channel, and the Irish Sea—but it is all one sea. So you speak of Sanctity, and Justice, and Righteousness, and Truth—but it is all one sea, and the name of that sea is Love. Separate perfections in God are as the colours in the rainbow, but the pure, white light in which all these colours are blended is Love. His wisdom is the intelligence of his love; his omnipotence is the might of his love; his righteousness is the integrity of his love; his sanctity is the purity of his love; his threatenings are the warnings of his love—the voice of his tenderness saying to his creatures, "Do yourselves no harm."—Rev. Robert P. Downes.

Providential Care (191).

On the 23rd of June a fire started to the north of us, just over the wall and near the minister's house. It is the great Han Lin library. Millions of money could not buy that library. But our enemies have such a mad desire to kill us that they seize the time when the wind is blowing hard from the north and set it on fire. Our well, far away, is of no use now. My heart sinks as I catch sight of the flame. "We are lost." Suddenly I remember that God is overhead, and I cast one swift look up and cry, "Dear Lord, please to change the wind." By and by we shall know that this short prayer is breathed by many into the dear Father's ear. And now something marvelous happens. In less than two minutes the wind turns round and we are safe. But the great library is in ashes. Never tell me that God is not atop

of law. We have seen him in the wind.—From Dr. Chauncey Goodrich in Missionary Herald.

Mr. Spurgeon's Adventure (192).

Mr. Spurgeon once had a singular adventure. He had been out in the country to preach, and, when traveling back to London, suddenly found that he had lost his railway ticket. A gentleman, the only other occupant of the compartment, noticing that he was fumbling about in his pocket, said: "I hope you have not lost anything, sir?" Mr. Spurgeon thanked him, and told him that it was his ticket that was missing, and that, by a remarkable coincidence, he had neither watch nor money with him. "But," added Mr. Spurgeon, "I am not at all troubled, for I have been on my Master's business, and I am quite sure all will be well. I have had so many interpositions of Divine Providence, in small matters as well as great ones, that I feel as if, whatever happens to me, I am bound to fall on my feet, like the man on the manx penny."

The gentleman seemed interested, and said that no doubt it would be all right. When the collector came to the compartment, he touched his hat to Mr. Spurgeon's traveling companion, who simply said, "All right, William," whereupon the man again saluted and retired.

After he had gone, Mr. Spurgeon said to the gentleman, "It is very strange that the collector did not ask for my ticket."

"No, Mr. Spurgeon," he replied, using his name for the first time, "It is only another illustration of what you told me about the providence of God watching over you even in little things; I am the general manager of this line, and it was, no doubt, divinely arranged that I should happen to be your companion just when I could be of service to you. I knew you were all right, and it has been a great pleasure to meet you under such happy circumstances."—A. M. B. in the British Weekly.

Just to be with Him (193).

A nervous clergyman, who could only compose to advantage when absolutely alone and undisturbed, thoughtlessly left his study door unlocked, and his little three-year-old child softly opened the door and came in. He was disturbed and, a little impatiently asked: 'My child, what do you want?' 'Nothing, papa.' 'Then what did you come in here for?' 'Just because I

wanted to be with you,' was the reply. To come into the Heavenly Father's presence and wait before him, wanting nothing but to be with him, how such an hour, now and again, would rest us."—N. Y. Independent.

The Father's Heart (194).

A large crowd of people were hooting and laughing at a man who had done some act with which they were displeased; "Nay," said an aged woman, "he is somebody's bairn." Such are the different views which different spectators take of the same subject; such is the feeling of maternal love, of which there is to me always an affecting image in Hogarth's fifth plate of Industry and Idleness, where an aged woman clings with the fondness of hope, not quite extinguished, to her vice-hardened child, whom she is accompanying to the ship destined to bear him away from his native soil, in whose shocking face every trace of the human countenance seems obliterated, and a brute beast's to be left in its stead, shocking and repulsive to all but her who watched over it in its cradle before it was so sadly altered. The Heavenly Father's love is no less constant. Though his child has become repulsive to all others by reason of his sin, yet for him ever yearns the Father's heart.

SERVICE XIV.

Winning the World for Christ.

Mark 16: 15.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Lesson:—Isaiah 60.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **A personal** command. **"Go ye."**
2. A **universal** parish . **"All the world," "Every creature."**
3. **A glorious mission.** "Preach the gospel," tell the glad tidings of (1) Pardon, (2) Power, (3) Hope.
4. **Go, Send, Pray, Pay.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

The Divine Appointment. (195)—To us comes the great commission, "Go!" And as we go we are to "witness." We are his witnesses. If the world ever hears of Jesus, it will be because we tell of him.

Then comes his wonderful word, "Lo!" So many claim the promised presence, but the "Lo" is joined to the "Go"; it is "Go, and lo, I am with you alway." If we would possess the "Lo" we must "Go," in sacrifice if not in person.

These are the words of Jesus to us, and when we heed them the whole world shall soon hear Jesus's words for them.—Rev. A. H. Bryan.

Ninety-five to five. (196)—So long as the Church spends ninety-five percent of our gifts on the work in America and only five percent in the heathen world, the work of missions cannot be successfully prosecuted.

One-fourth and One-eighth. (197)—Only one out of every four women, and only one out of every eight men, of the average church have given any amount to foreign missions.

One cent vs. $15.00. (198)—One cent a year is spent for each one of the 1,000,000,000 non-Christians in heathen lands. We spend $15 at home for every one of the 20,000,000 Christians each year.

One to 275,000. (199)—There is one minister of the gospel at home for every 546 people, and only one minister in heathen lands for every 275,000 persons.

Worth Exporting. (200)—If the religion of Christ is not big enough for a Chinaman, it is not big enough for an American. If the Church isn't big enough to carry it to a Chinaman, it will not carry it with any efficiency across the street or around the corner.

Need of God. (201)—A lodge or a library may serve a community. It takes God to serve the world. The chief characteristic and glory of the Church is that it is a heart and hand for the last lost soul in the foreign fields.

Values. (202)—On the Congo they value a man at the number of cattle he will bring; on the Hudson and on the Thames they value men too often by their bank accounts or their social standing; but by the river of life every man is valued by what he is, as revealed by what he has done.

Growth. (203)—It took one hundred years of modern missionary effort to win the first million converts. We passed the million mark in 1896. It only took twelve years to win the second million. For the past few years we have been winning them at a rate of a million in six years.

God's Jewels. (204)—In the blue clay of Africa the fortunate discovered diamonds for the crowns of potentates. Moffat, Livingstone, Hugo Hahn and Bishop Hamington found other diamonds on those black fields for the glory crown of the King of kings.

A Gospel Trust. (205)—Why should not this opening century witness a great trust organized by Christian millionaires and organized exclusively for Christ? Not to advance the price of the Gospel, for heavenly merchandise is without money and without price, but to help get this free gift of God at once to the whole world of dying men. Not to control the market, but to get into the markets of all the world with the wares of the kingdom of heaven. So that into every mart of trade, into every industrial center, into every palace and hovel of sin, into every wild moral desert on earth where men know so much devil that they do not believe in any true God, shall be sent the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.—Herrick Johnson.

For Coming Generations. (206)—The purpose of missionary effort is not merely to try to save adult pagans, but as well to create through the introduction of Christianity a better condition abroad which shall increase the presumption that the following

generations will become converted. One of the most trenchant and telling things said at the Ecumenical Conference was the declaration of Dr. Maltbie D. Babcock when, speaking of the heathen, he said: "You are wronging unborn children by not putting the light in the faces of their fathers and mothers." Now is the time to work for the generations coming into paganism, that when they come they may not remain pagan, but may find an easy highway into Christianity already prepared for their childish feet.

Blessing to Givers. (207)—When our Master said it was more blessed to give than to receive, he meant, if he meant anything—and who can point to a single word of his that is not full of the deepest meaning?—that the giver received greater blessings than the recipient of the gift; he meant that the reflex influence of giving was more blessed than even the direct influence; He meant that he who gave to missions received greater benefits than those to whom the gifts were sent; that the greatest work of foreign missions is accomplished at home and not abroad, in the hearts of Christian men and women who give their money and their lives, more than in the hearts of the heathen to whom the Gospel comes; he meant that the herald of the good tidings had a happier lot than the hearer of the tidings. Yes, giving to missions is like mercy,

"It is twice blessed,
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes,"

and, like mercy, it is "an attribute of God himself;" and men's love is likest God's when they give not only what they have, but themselves also.

Here, then, is a stupendous truth that the Christian world has scarcely begun to realize, for think what this means. The direst influence of mission work—foreign missions, for instance—is far from contemptible, but the indirect-reflex-influence is even greater.—Bomar.

In but not of the World. (208)—It is by a Christlike dedication to the world that Christ saves us from the world. You go to your Lord and say, "O Lord, this world is tempting me, and I fear its stains! Shall I run away from it?" And the answer comes as if a voice spoke out of the open sky, "No, go close up to this world, and help it; feel for its wickedness; pity it, sacrifice yourself for it; so shall you be safest from its infections; so

shall you be surest not to sacrifice yourself to it."—Phillips Brooks.

Giving One's Self. (209)—If you want to do people good, you can; but you have got to pay the price for it. The price is personal sacrifice and effort. The example of Christ is the all-instructive one in the case. People talk about him being their pattern, but they often forget that whatever more there was in Christ's cross and passion there was this in it; the exemplification for all time of the one law by which any reformation can be wrought on men—that a sympathizing man shall give himself to it, and that by personal influence alone men shall be drawn and won from out of the darkness and filth. A loving heart and a sympathetic word, the exhibition of a Christian life and conduct, the fact of going down into the midst of evil and trying to lift men up.—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Progress of One Hundred Years (210).

A hundred years ago, as Mr. Mott reminds us, one-third of the globe was almost unknown. At the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign practically nothing was known of the interior of China, Japan, Central Asia, Tibet or Afghanistan. As late as 1880 the interior of Africa was almost a blank, though within twelve years it was fully mapped out. Even Central Asia has given up its secrets to recent exploration. It took Carey five months to go from Dover to Calcutta in 1793, but one can make the trip now in three weeks. China is being covered with a network of railways. The Siberian, the Cape-to-Cairo and the Euphrates Valley railways are likely to open up vast tracts of the world to the tourist and trader, and how much more to the missionary!

Over one third of the heathen world is under the direct control of the Christian powers, and the remaining two thirds are so much under their influence that they can practically secure the safety of the missionary. Add to this the post office, cable communication and the fact that the Scriptures have already been translated into "all the conquering languages and a great many of the second class, or permanent ones," and the conviction is irresistible that in this age, as never before, God is setting before his church an open door.—F. B. Meyer.

A Vision of Duty and Privilege (211).

Raymund Lull, that brilliant student in the University

of Montpelier, later a professor there, must have had a vision something like this when he turned his back on alluring prospects on the home field and flung his life upon the Mohammedan world at a time when apostasy meant death. A year and a half he was imprisoned in a dungeon. Twice he was banished from the shores of North Africa. At last, taken beyond the wall, he was stoned to death. As the stones were falling upon him, before he became unconscious, he said: "He that loves not lives not, and he that lives by the Life shall never die." We are called to heroism. The great test will be the test of moral heroism. A man with a watchword like this will have a severe test in our modern college life. To live naturally, not fanatically and abnormally, but naturally, and unworldly, Christ-like life in the midst of the cross-currents and the downward tug of our modern college life and its environment, will require the constant exercise of moral courage.—John R. Mott.

Left Out (212).

It was the communion day in our church. My thoughts were all of my own unworthiness and Christ's love to me, until Mr. E. asked the question nobody ever notices: Has any one been omitted in the distribution of the bread? And it seemed to me I could see millions on millions of women rising silently in India, Africa, Siam, Persia, in all the countries where they need the Lord but know him not, to testify that they have been omitted in the distribution of the bread and cup. And they can take it from no hands but ours; and we do not pass it on.

"Sudden, before my inward, open vision,
Millions of faces crowded up to view;
Sad eyes that said, 'For us is no provision;
Give us your Saviour, too.'

"'Give us,' they cry, 'your cup of consolation,
Never to our outreaching hands 'tis passed;
We long for the Desire of every nation,
And, oh, we die so fast.'"

—Bright Bits for Missionary Reading.

The Condition of Success (213).

How many men, as Wendell Phillips used to say, "fade prudently into nameless graves, while the few forget themselves

into immortality." It is the man that forgets himself and buries his live that lives forever. Some one said in his hearing once, "Christ is weak." "Weak!" he said, "look at the men he has mastered." These make the world's conquerors. Until Christ has mastered men they are not prepared to conquer the world, but when they are mastered by the vision of Christ, then they go forth consciously led by him into all the world.—Bishop Hendrix.

A Man with a Message (214).

Not only must we have simple and definite faith in a personal Saviour, and in a living Word if we are to prevail, but we must also have a Message. If you go up and down through the homeland, if you go out into the mission fields of the world, you will find tne same demand, **Wanted, a man with a message.** They want the simple message of God and they demand it of every one who goes in his name. Do you remember the extraordinary power which Isaiah had in the old time? Read the account of his call to the ministry. "In the year that king Uzziah died, . . . I saw the Lord. . . . And he said, Go." Do you remember the very remarkable power which John the Baptist had in his brief but brilliant thought, "I am a messenger of God; I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness." And wherever they went, meeting all the difficulties of the day, facing opposition and danger—yea, and even death, each was upheld by this glorious thought: "I am sent here by God with a message to the hearts and consciences of men." And so you who go today to the mission field must have a message, and those to whom you minister must realize, not only in the words you speak but in the life you live, that you have come in the name of Another, with a message from the living God.—Principal T. R. O'Meara.

A Short-Visioned Prophecy (215).

The British East India Company said at the beginning of the nineteenth century: "The sending of Christian missionaries into our Eastern possessions is the maddest, most expensive, most unwarranted project that was ever proposed by a lunatic enthusiast." The English Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal said at the close of the nineteenth century: "In my judgment Christian missionaries have done more lasting good to the people of India than all other agencies combined."

SERVICE XV.

The Golden Moment: Opportunity.
Galatians 6: 10, Margin.

So, then, while we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men and especially toward them that are of the household of faith.

Lesson:—Matthew 25: 31-46.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. Opportunities for service are **God-sent.**
2. **Other's welfare, and our own,** will be determined by our use of them.
3. God holds us to **account for them.**
4. **Let us** devote our lives to doing good.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Today is the Time. (216)—The certainty that life can not be long, and the probability that it will be much shorter than nature allows, ought to awaken every man to the active prosecution of whatever he is desirous to perform. It is true that no diligence can ascertain success; death may intercept the swiftest career; but he who is cut off in the midst of an honest undertaking has at least the honor of falling in his rank, and has fought the battle though he missed the victory.—Dr. Johnson.

Opportunity. (217)—Alas for those who let the golden moment pass—who let the gate of opportunity be shut in their faces, while they wait before it trying to muster favoring conditions, or argument and authority, like an army with banners to escort them through.—Sarah Orne Jewett.

Enter In. (218)—Are there not opportunities for crossing all rivers? And are not those opportunities of very brief duration? It is wonderful to mark how the door of opportunity swings open in life; it is even more wonderful to notice how it swings back again, as if to declare that mercy is not to be trifled with and the hospitality of God is not an indiscriminate beneficence.—Joseph Parker.

Guidance for Action. (219)—With Paul the present was the supreme moment. Paul's present life was in a measure influenced by his past life. He realized that his present life would have an important bearing upon his future. These facts before him,

he put his whole soul into the present moment. How many fail just here! They, instead of living in the present, or of filling the present with active service, take much of the present time in lamenting the past, or in hoping the future will have for them something better than the present has for them. Paul did not do this; he occupied the present. He filled it full of noble, earnest service. And he adds these strong words: "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Notice, by the faith of the Son of God. If Jesus is made unto us "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30). These facts being true, then we can see how Paul could appropriate Christ's faith, and, in Christ, make his faith to be his own.

Tomorrow (220).

"There are wonderful things we are going to do
Some other day;
And harbors we hope to drift into
Some other day.
With folded hands and oars that trail,
We wait and watch for a favoring gale
To fill the folds of an idle sail,
Some other day.

"We know we must toil if ever we win
Some other day;
But we say to ourselves, there's time to begin
Some other day.
And so, deferring, we loiter on,
Until at last we find withdrawn
The strength and hope we leaned upon
Some other day."

Servants and Martyrs. (221)—It calls for more real heroism to be true to Christ and his standards in our ordinary, every-day life, than to stand the test of physical martyrdom for Christ in a foreign missionary field. To be confronted with the opportunity of dying for our faith is a challenge that usually calls out the best in us. Merely to face the opportunity of living for our faith, and that in what seem to us the common-place, uninteresting circumstances of a humdrum home or business life, year after year with no great change in prospect, does not seem like a challenge to heroism at all. For this very reason, it is the more

of a challenge. Endurance is more heroic than a spurt; it takes endurance to live the Christ-life for thirty, forty, sixty years of uneventful service. Such a life honors Christ, and he honors such a life, as the most convincing evidence of the power of Christ that the world can know.—St. Louis Christian Advocate.

Few Commands. (222)—With that incomparable delicacy of touch which is found everywhere in Christ's dealings with men, and with that reverence for the human character which made him far more hesitant in the imposition of commandments than any other leader of men, he has given us the opportunity of faith —and what is comparable with it!—Charles H. Brent.

Great Things. (223)—There are people who would do great acts, but, because they wait for great opportunities, life passes, and the acts of love are not done at all.—F. W. Robertson.

Day by Day. (224)—Deferred duties usually mean neglected duties. In this field accumulation is the enemy of accomplishment. Accumulated dividends may be a very good thing, but they are never earned by allowing unfinished tasks to pile up on us. When we have to admit that there are a score of duties that have been awaiting our attention for days or weeks or months, and that ought to have had our attention long ago, we may at the same time safely admit that something is wrong with our plan of life. The whole trouble probably lies in our not doing to-day what we ought to do to-day; and that results from two sins: misusing some of our time, and wasting some of our time. the right selection of our tasks, and then intense concentration on our tasks, will put a stop to the fatal accumulation. No one has any right to stagger along under the burden of unfinished tasks that ought long ago to have been put out of the way.—Great Thoughts.

Little Lights. (225)—Faithful Christians, those who are the real children of God, are reminded by St. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, that they "shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life." Not all lights are of the same magnitude, but the nature of light is always the same. There are places where the smallest light may be of essential service. Lighthouses are good illustrations of this fact. Of the lights on the coasts and rivers of the United States there are some fourteen hundred, but only forty-five are of the first order. Some of the smallest show the path of safety through very narrow, intricate and perilous channels. We cannot all be lights of the first order like St.

Paul, or Martin Luther, or John Wesley, but we can all share to the measure of our ability in the sphere of influence which God gives us. By our fidelity, our purity, our love, our joy, our courage under most trying circumstances, we can constantly hold forth the word of life. The light of life must be made manifest in homes and workshops, in stores and factories and mines, on battlefields and hospitals, and to the multitudes that throng the streets, or the world will be in darkness. The feeblest saint may cheer many and save at least a soul or two by letting his light shine. A candle in a cottage may be a more blessed luminary than a star in the sky.—Northwestern Christian Advocate.

The Will of God. (226)—To do the will of God—that is the chief end and the glory of man. No other aim can stand in the test of time, to say nothing of eternity. No other aim can bring every note in the gamut of our being into play and make a genuine psalm of life. No other can take every fragment of our being, every word and deed, every thought and longing, every task and trial, every test and sorrow, and fit it into a mosaic whose pattern is the one shown on the mount, whose clear image is the predestined likeness of Jesus Christ.—Maltbie D. Babcock.

Obey. (227)—Every obedience is the opening of another door into the boundless universe of life.—George Macdonald.

Business of Life. (228)—"Life," says de Tocqueville, "is not pleasure nor pain, but an earnest business with which we are intrusted, which we are to carry on and to carry out with honor." "Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God," is an utterance of the soul that gives life at once the highest unity and consistency, power and joy, peace and fruitfulness. The smallest task feels its dignity, the noblest calling becomes the more ennobled. The trying and disagreeable and wearisome things are seen in a new light and borne with a high hope. It is like work on a splendid building. Digging and carting, cutting and trimming, stone and mortar and scaffolding, all belong to a great purpose and push its fulfillment.

Home Religion. (229)—To engage in the performance of home duties faultlessly, without petulence, without haste, without fretting—to repress the sarcastic and unkind word, to be calm in the hot moment of anger, to do without weariness, and to suffer without murmuring, to be charitable in judgment, and trample out of the heart the Pharisee spirit, deeming life at once too short and too costly for quarrels and for pride; to maintain a

chivalrous honor in all business relations; to hold back from the temptations of doubtful or hasty gain; to wear "the white flower," not "of a blameless life" only, but of a life cleansed from its earthliness and made pure by the Holy Spirit; to walk about the world and before men with a calm heart filled with love, to shed abroad the "sweet savor of Christ," and allure men to the heaven to which they know you to be traveling—these are but many-sided exhibitions of the one holy character, many facets of the one jewel of fidelity by which you are to be "approved" of your Father which is in heaven.—Punshon.

Pleasing God. (230)—There is no action so slight or so mean but it may be done to a great purpose and ennobled thereby, nor is any purpose so great but that it may be helped by slight actions, and may be so done as to be helped much—most especially, the chief of all purposes, the pleasing of God.—Ruskin.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

An Incentive to Fidelity (231).

It was this thought which so powerfully possessed Gladstone at one period of his life. "My mind involuntarily reverts," he says, "to the sad and solemn conviction that a fearfully great portion of the world around me is dying in sin.....and entertaining (this conviction) as I do, how can I bear to think of my own seeking to wanton in the pleasures of life—or to give up my heart to its business, while my fellow creatures, to whom I am bound by every tie of human sympathies, of a common sinfulness and a common redemption, day after day are sinking into death?"

The Best Investments (232).

My own money investments have generally brought me little but trouble and worry. But the investments of thoughtfulness which I happen to have made are increasing joys to me. Just try it. Think up some jolly word which you will say to the blind man you pass on the way to the office. Write a tender, strong little note to the mother who has lost her baby. Remember to congratulate Tom Brownson on his promotion. Give your sister Lucy a lift with that abominable third conjugation. Kiss grandma as you pass her, and whisper to her that she is the light of your home. Thank the minister for the comforting sermon he preached last Sunday, and borrow it for the benefit of bedridden Mr. Folsom. Put a blossoming geranium on a plate and set it

in the middle of the dining-table. Oh, these investments of thoughtfulness are endless, and when you once begin with them there is absolutely no stopping.—Christian Endeavor World.

The Busy Life (233).

Mr. Carnegie once said that the great trouble with rich men in this country was that they had so much to retire from, and so little to retire to. This is not only true of some rich men, but it is true of hosts of young men and women everywhere. They are absolutely at a loss as to what to do when the day's work is over. Many lives are lost to virtue and usefulness because of a lack of interest in what is going on in the world.

Edmund Clarence Stedman, the poet-banker, who died recently, was a fine example of "the busy life." His life was exceptional among men of letters in that he combined with the calling he most loved, the life of an active business man. From his college days his tastes were distinctly literary, and until he entered upon a business career in 1864, when he was thirty-one years of age, he had followed literary pursuits. He often said, in later life, that he went into the banking business in order to make a living, retaining at the same time, his devotion to literary work. He always kept his business interests, as well as his business hours, distinct from his literary interests and work.—Homiletic Review.

Rich Returns (234).

On one of the Clyde River steamers a Christian man on his holidays was giving away tracts. Among others who received one was a gentleman belonging to Glasgow, who remarked, as he received it, that he feared such efforts did little permanent good. "I am not opposed to such work," he said, "In my younger days I did a great deal of it myself, but I cannot say that I ever saw any fruit from it."

The tract distributor was somewhat "damped" by that remark, coming from one who evidently was a Christian of many years' standing. But he instantly remembered that his own conversion was brought about by means of a tract, which he received when a lad of twelve as he walked along the street one wintry night.

As he passed the door of a mission hall, a young man, standing evidently for the purpose of getting passers-by to go in, handed him a tract, and asked him to go inside and hear the Gospel. He did go in and heard words there that awakened him

to think of eternity and his state before God, and he went home in deep soul trouble. In his anxiety he turned to the tract he had received, read it, and was saved. The tract distributor told this story to the gentleman, who listened with evident interest, and when it was finished, he said, "May I ask where this most interesting event took place?"

The man named the street, the hall and the very night on which he got the tract, and was invited inside. The gentleman's eyes filled with tears; he grasped the distributor's hand, and said with great emotion: "It was my work for many a night, when a young man, newly converted, to stand at that door giving tracts, and inviting passers-by, and I well remember inviting in the bright-eyed lad that wintry night. But I lost heart soon after that, and gave it up, thinking such work was almost useless. Now, after twenty years, God has let me know it was not in vain, and if he spare me to return to the city, I shall by his grace return to the service he gave me long ago, confessing my faithlessness in leaving it."

But the twenty intervening years were lost. How many more golden sheaves might have appeared to that Christian worker's account in the day of Christ, had he continued in the service that the Lord gave him to do.—Believer's Magazine.

One Life's Fidelity and its Fruit (235).

More than fifty years ago Hiram Bingham and his wife went from Hawaii to Gilbert Islands, then inhabitated by a tribe of cannibals, "sullen, passionate, cruel, and treacherous," as they were described by navigators of that day. Last November 30,000 Christian Gilbertese met to celebrate the emergence of their race from savagery to civilization. All the pastors of these people have been trained by their first missionary, and 11,000 copies of his translation of the Bible have been sold; 2,000 religious books are bought annually. At the time of Dr. Bingham's semi-centennial jubilee, he received a letter of love and gratitude from the islanders. This is the record of one man.—Sabbath Reading.

The Daily Race (236).

Steady-going goodness is harder than spectacular heroism. It calls for more endurance and more character to hold to the highest standards of life in the commonplaces of every-day routine than to nerve one's self up for a single and exceptional effort. The five-mile run is more exhaustive than the hundred-yard dash. Yet this prolonged, and severe test of every-day

living is the only true test, and it is the one which we must all meet. Moreover, the best way to be ready for the emergency test, when it comes, is to live through the common day in the red-letter-day spirit. No day was common to Christ, nor will it be to those who make every day his.—Sunday-school Times.

Service (237).

To all of us, young and old, men and women, the scene in the house of Simon the leper comes across the feverish centuries with its quiet sermon, asking us if we are as faithful to the best impulses of our nature as the woman was to hers.....Are we breaking a single flask of precious ointment in disinterested self-forgetfulness, in behalf of any oppressed and injured child of the eternal Father? Are we simply striving the best we may to

"Look up and not down,
Look out and not in,
Look forward and not back.
And lend a hand"?

Now, as then, the real struggle of life is not for bread and clothing, but for ideals, for truth and purity; into this higher struggle this peasant woman of Bethany entered and did what she could. Are we doing as much?—Rev. J. L. Jones.

Rich in Good Works (238).

All may be "rich in faith," "rich in good works." All do "possess all things." A short time ago Fergus Barry died in the poor-house at Worcester, Mass. After his death, uncashed checks were found upon his person amounting to $1,700. Investigation led to the belief he was worth $80,000. How many of God's people live like paupers spiritually! Yet they are "heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ."—Homiletic Review.

SERVICE XVI.

Spiritual Recuperation.

Isaiah 40: 31.

"But they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint."

Lesson:—Isaiah 40: 26-31.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. The drain of life is **exhausting** (1) Tasks, (2) Temptation, (3) Trials.
2. **Replenishment needed** in the spiritual as in the physical.
3. **God provides** for this fully. "Renew, etc."
4. **The condition,** "Wait on the Lord."

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Be Not Troubled. (239)—Significantly we speak of being "disheartened" in our work for Christ; our use of the word should warn us against allowing the inward altar-fires to die down, or even burn low. Without the Holy Spirit's strengthening with power in the inward man, it is impossible for the heart to be always as full of zeal as the hands are full of work.

"The sum of all is—Yes, my duty is great:
My faith's still greater; then my faith's enough."

For the promised gift of the Holy Spirit be it ours to ask the Father, let us ask in the name of Christ, and let us ask in faith. The Holy Spirit's strengthening shall empower us to control the foes within, which hitherto have rebelled against the sway of Christ's sceptre of love; his strength shall make us "mighty to prevail.....where unaided man must fail;" his strength shall sustain us beneath the heaviest load, and renew our vigour even when other's burdens are added to our own; yea, his strength shall so energize our will, that no dispiriting exhaustion shall rob us of the joy and the reward of being fit to labor from early morn, through the mid-day heat, and in the twilight glow.—Tasker.

Rest and Peace (240).

There is many a rest in the road of life,
If we would only stop to take it,
And many a tune from the better land,
If the querulous heart would wake it!
To the sunny soul that is full of hope,
And whose beautiful trust ne'er faileth,
The grass is green and the flowers are bright,
Though the wintry wind prevaileth.

Better to hope though the clouds hang low,
And to keep the eyes still lifted;
For the sweet blue sky will soon peep through
When the ominous clouds are rifted!
There was never a night without a day,
Or an evening without a morning,
And the darkest hour, as the proverb goes,
Is the hour before the dawning.

Better to weave in the web of life
A bright and golden filling,
And to do God's will with a ready heart,
And hands that are swift and willing,
Then to snap the delicate, slender threads
Of our curious lives asunder,
And then blame heaven for the tangled ends,
And sit and grieve, and wonder.

M. A. Kidder in The Circle.

Prayer Brings Peace. (241)—Live a veritable life of prayer. Make prayer the chief part not alone of your life, but of your service. Having answers to prayer as a constant experience. Being like the young man in a conference in India, who said, "I used to pray three times a day; now I pray only once a day, and that is all day." Feet busy all the day, hands ceaselessly active, head full of matters of business, but the heart never out of communication with Him. Has prayer become to you like that? Would you have it so? Wait a moment.

Time to be Holy. (242)—Those little moments which bring us with kindly hands out of life's disquiet into the rest of communion, are the skylights through which heaven shines into our souls.

These are the times when our Lord yet speaks, saying, "Come ye apart and rest awhile." Here we look upward, and learn the source of our strength and power. The petty and feverish things of life are lost, and we gaze through faith and prayer into the calm and undisturbed heart of God, and pray, "Give us this day our daily bread."

His munificent and paternal heart opens with love which dispenses to every need, and we rise to take our old appointed tasks again with new courage and with new vision of the relative values of the things which oft try us, as they stand contrasted with the things which are eternal.—Selected.

Jesus' Needs. (243)—Jesus prayed at the grave of Lazarus that the people might believe that the Father had sent him. After a busy day, at evening he sent the multitude away, and went "up into a mountain, apart to pray." He withdrew into the wilderness to pray. He arose in the morning a great while before day, and went into a solitary place and there prayed. Jesus prayed to his Father to glorify him, to preserve his apostles in unity and truth, to glorify them and all believers with him in heaven. He prayed in the garden of Gethsemane. He felt that same need of communion with the Father that we, his humble followers, so often feel. He who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," left the crowd and even his beloved disciples, and alone with God sought rest and comfort through prayer. Oh, that we, his professed followers, might grow familiar with the miracles of power and learn that we are safe in his holy keeping. Should we not receive a thousandfold more happiness, even in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting?—Herald & Presbyter.

Harmony. (244)—"Nothing tunes the soul like prayer. He that is able to go and plead his case with God shall soon 'mount with wings as eagles; shall run and not be weary; shall walk and not faint.' We should pray for a spirit of prayer; we cannot expect a favor we do not ask for. I am persuaded that God will honor prayer. Prayer is the key that unlocks every blessing. Beware of general requests. Come and specify what you would have; carry your real concerns to Christ, and be satisfied with his care and management of you. The government is upon his shoulders, not yours. It is enough that he undertakes for you, therefore transact all your affairs with him."

Special Prayer. (245)—Prayer is the key to open the day, and the bolt to shut in the night. But as the clouds drop the early dew and the evening dew upon the grass, yet it would not spring and grow green by that constant and double falling of the dew, unless some great shower at certain seasons did supply the rest; so the customary devotion of prayer twice a day is the falling of the early and later dew. But if you will increase and flourish in works of grace, empty the great clouds sometimes, and let them fall in a full shower of prayer. Choose out seasons when prayer shall overflow like Jordan in time of harvest.—Bishop Taylor.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Look to the Lord for Help (246)

Within the dense leaf-screen of a Brazilian forest the trees are tenuous, often mere rope-like creepers, until they burst through the woven canopy of boughs, and feed their starved tissues with the light. A tropical plant, removed to a greyer sky, stints in full growth, and lifts a tiny shrinking flower in place of the gorgeous blossoms which adorn its congeners as they thrive and flourish in their native climate. The vine pushes its roots out of the fruitful soil into the sterile clay beneath, and the purple clusters cease from the bough, and are replaced by a sprinkling of hard and bitter berries. But Nature does not look on the forest lianas, the pinched exotic, the wild grapes of a degenerate vine as the just measure of her strength; the impulse of Nature is always towards "life abundant." In like manner the soul which has been renewed in Christ Jesus must lift itself into the light, that it may dwell there, must spread and grow in its true environment.

A Glorious Certainty (247).

One thing I do believe—more surely than the evidence of the senses, for they may be imposed upon;—more surely than those self-evident axioms, upon which mathematical truth is built, for those axioms are only spun out of the human mind, and not external to it. I do believe that God is true. I do believe that whenever God makes a promise, he will assuredly fulfil it. I do believe that if you or I come under the terms of the promise, he will fulfil it to us. It is no marvel that God has withheld the blessing, if I so dishonored him in my heart as never seriously to believe that he could or would bestow it. And, in future, if

I would meet with success, I must come to the Throne of Grace with an undoubting mind.—Goulburn.

Our Need of Recuperation (248)

It is said that Alpine climbers can describe less of their biggest than of their second-rate ascents, because the excessive fatigue felt in the more exacting feats has blunted the keenness of perception. And exhaustion, through the stress and strain of worldly pursuits, the nervous fatigue which follows the frenzied race for fame and artificial pleasure, may blunt the spiritual senses and bring doubt and uncertainty into the soul.—Rev. T. G. Selby.

Wait on the Lord (249).

I have heard soldiers say that in a battle the hardest thing is not the final rush. In that wild moment a man forgets himself and is caught into a mad tumult of enthusiasm. The hardest thing is to stand quiet and wait, while the hail of the enemy's fire is whistling round—to wait in the darkness and in the face of death, and be forbidden to return the fire. It is that which tries the nerves and tests the heart. It is that which shows the stuff that men are made of. In such an hour a man is not asleep—he is intensely and tremendously alive. And I mention that, to show how the word waiting does not describe a dull or sluggish state, but is compatible with ardent feelings, and with a spirit that is burning at its brightest. Brethren, it is such thoughts as these that we must import into waiting upon God. To wait upon God is not to be inactive. It is not a state of spiritual torpor. It tests a man—shows what is in his heart—calls his whole being into high vitality. Never was life so strenuous as Christ's, and the whole of it was a waiting upon God.—Rev. G. H. Morrison.

The Physician Needed (250).

Some professed Christians pinch and starve themselves into walking skeletons, and then try to excuse themselves on the plea of ill-health or "constitutional" ailments. The medicines they need are from Christ's pharmacy. A large draught of Bible taken every morning, a throwing open of the heart's windows to the promises of the Master, a few words of honest prayer, a deed or two of kindness to the next person whom you meet, will do more to brighten your countenance and help your digestion than all the drugs of the doctors. If you want to get your aches

and trials out of sight, hide them under your mercies.—Theodore L. Cuyler.

How to Wait on the Lord (251).

One plain way is by habitual direction of thought to Him, by cultivating the sense of his presence. It is hard amid the whirl and press, but it is possible. How do we keep our dear ones on earth who are absent? Only by thinking about them, and we do not need, if we really love them, to be told to think about them; we can not help it. In the same way, if we are to keep ourselves in that close personal relation to the Christ "whom having not seen we love," there must be a great deal more actual occupation of our minds and thoughts with him than is usual amongst professing Christians. The bulk of our lives is necessarily devoted to temporal things, and unless we can bring about an alliance between daily work and heavenly thoughts, our hold on Christ will be slack. We cleave to the Lord by obedience also. A little disobedience makes a great separation. We cleave to him by depending on him, as a cragsman clutches the rope which keeps him from being dashed to pieces on the sharp reef, or drowned in the heaving billows far below.—Alexander Maclaren.

SERVICE XVII.

Putting on Christ.

Romans 13: 14.

"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."

Lesson:—Ephesians 3: 14-19.

I. Put on Christ:

1. By entering into such **close and loving relations with him** that unconsciously you reproduce his traits of character.
2. By meditating upon **his life as revealed in his Word.**
3. By **imitating his example** in going about doing good. Chrysostom quotes the common phrase, "Such a one hath put on (imitated) such a one."

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

A New Life. (252)—The obvious meaning, therefore, of the words, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," is, assume the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. The putting on the new man is the counterpart of the putting off the old man, and what that is Paul explains when he says, "that ye put off concerning the former conversation—that is, concerning your former way of life—the old man, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind." Our old ways and character are to be laid aside, and therefore to put on the new man is to assume a new character and new ways. To put on the Lord Jesus Christ is to make our own his character.—Marcus Dods, D.D.

With Christ. (253)—There must be the cultivation of personal likeness to Christ and personal fellowship with Christ in this mighty enterprise. Here, now, at the close of this convention, let us clasp hands with Jesus Christ and covenant with him that we will live with him until we know that he is essential to the world, until we share his purpose for the world, until we are like him in all holy fellowship and in all rich reward, that we will pray for the world until it rests on our hearts as it rests upon his, that we will do this until the last man knows his name and until we stand on the height that is yet unreached and cast our crowns before him.—Bishop McDowell.

Unworldly. (254)—A man does not cease to be worldly by adopting a ritual of renunciation any more than a Bushman becomes a European by washing off his grease and ochre, and attiring himself in clean linen and broadcloth. The casual gossip of the cloister may show that society, and the petty interests of the butterfly crowd, loom as large as ever in the imagination of its inmates. The unconscious leanings of an evangelical home ruled by the straightest maxims may show that the silly, senseless world finds a tell-tale mirror there. The trivialities of life, upon which the back has been ostensibly turned, cling like burrs to the textures of the inner man. Honest unworldliness is central to a man's scheme of thought, and begins far down below the surface. We cannot bind it upon men by artificial precepts.—Selby.

The Secret. (255)—We need not be surprised if men and women who are much with Christ come to be Christlike.—Rev. J. G. Beauchamp.

(256)—You have no right to reckon on God's help and protection and guidance, and all the other splendid privileges which he promises to "the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ," until you have this first blessing, the mercy of God in Christ Jesus; for it is "in" Jesus Christ that all the promises of God are yea and Amen.—Frances Ridley Havergal.

(257)—"The glory is not in the task, but in doing it for him;" true, but doing it for him ennobles even the meanest tasks, and all our work grows in importance, in beauty, and in effectiveness, as we bring this spirit into the doing of it.—Alice King.

Price of Peace. (258)—Desire only the will of God. Seek him alone, and you will find peace; you shall enjoy it in spite of the world. What is it that troubles you? Poverty, neglect, want of success, external or internal troubles? Look upon everything as in the hands of God and as real blessings that he bestows upon his children, of which you receive your portion. Then the world may turn its face from you, but nothing will deprive you of peace.—Fenelon.

Worldly Approval. (259)—If you are a follower of Jesus, and maintain a consistent Christ-like walk and conversation, you must expect oppositions to that part of your spiritual life which, in its outward developments, comes under the observation of men. They will treat it as they treated the Saviour—they will

despise it. Dream not that worldlings will admire you, or that the more holy and the more Christ-like you are, the more peaceably people will act towards you. They prized not the polished gem—how should they value the jewel in the rough. "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" If we were more like Christ, we would be more hated by his enemies. It were a sad dishonor to a child of God to be the world's favorite. It is a very ill omen to hear a wicked world clap its hands and shout, "Well done," to the Christian man. He may begin to look to his character, and wonder whether he has not been doing wrong, when the unrighteous give their approbation. Let us be true to our Master, and have no friendship with a blind and base world, which scorns and rejects him.—C. H. Spurgeon.

Christian Warfare. (260)—Warfare against the world without is trivial as compared with the battle in every heart to maintain the spirit of Christ within. Only they who make severe struggles to secure a close copy of the Christ-spirit can begin to appreciate the difficulty of its attainment. There is scarcely a day in which the most devoted Christian professors do not fail here, and fail badly. They do not make open and gross violations of it. They do not fall into a rage, and storm and swear and lie. They check themselves in the overt act. But O, how the spirit within them is stirred and riled and embittered ofttimes.

More Like Him. (261)—All healthy Christians are steadily approximating to complete accord with the divine nature. They are growing up into their living Head, "from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together, through that which every joint supplieth, maketh increase in love." They speak the truth in love, and they love the truth. They find a message from God in each of the providential events, however small, of every day, and have so valid a sense of the actual personal presence of the Saviour as to be able to talk over all things with him, obtaining power for the days and peace for the nights. Their spiritual life takes on ever larger and larger proportions, as their union with its Source grows closer.—The Riches of His Grace.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The New Life in Christ (262)

For the cross here is merely a vivid expression for the death of Jesus, a death into which Paul, in common with all believers, has been introduced. There is now no longer any inward fellow-

ship between the servant of Christ and the unchristian world; each is crucified to the other. A missionary among the Bechuanas relates a simple but accurate interpretation of this thought, communicated by a native convert, who said to his teacher, "Soon I shall be dead, and they will bury me in my field. My flocks will come to pasture above me. But I shall no longer hear them, and I shall not come forth from my tomb to take them and carry them with me to the sepulchre. They will be strange to me, as I to them. Such is the image of my life in the midst of the world since I believed in Christ."

Christ Before All (263).

It is related that an artist once painted a picture of the divine Christ pointing to the lilies of the valley. When the people gazed upon the work of art they were especially impressed with the delicate proportions of the lilies, and when they left the picture-gallery they each and all exclaimed, "What beautiful lilies!"

When the artist heard this he seized his brush and went to his picture and struck out the lilies, exclaiming, "No work of mine shall hide the Saviour."

Putting on Christ (264).

For him who puts on Christ, life is lived for God, and the most secular things are hallowed. An ancient watchword of the Church of the Valleys was "In His Name." The Vaudois peasant sowed his field or trimmed his vines or gathered his olives in the name of his Lord, regarding those actions as a service not less acceptable than the frequent attendance in the village church, or the reverent participation in the festival of the Holy Supper.

Life is a priestly service rendered within a sanctuary and offered to a present God. It is impossible to conceive a loftier thought than this.

As A Garment (265).

Not simply the righteousness of our Saviour, not simply the beauty of his holiness, not the graces of his character, are we to put on as a garment. The Lord himself is our vesture. Every Christian is not only a Christ-bearer, but a Christ-wearer. We are so to enter into him by communion, so to be endued with his presence and embued with his Spirit that men shall see him when they behold us, as they see our garments when they look upon our bodies.

How One Man Put On Christ (266).

John Wanamaker says: "I was a country boy who had come into the city. A salesman asked me if I wouldn't go to his church. It was a quiet, old-fashioned meeting. There was a handsome old man of about seventy-five years of age, who got up and in the gravest way said he was just waiting for God to take him; and he had lived his life; that God had been good to him; that religion was a good thing to die by. I sat 'way back, and I soliloquized: 'Well, old man, you can't touch me; you have lived your life; you haven't any sympathy with a big boy; it has passed over my head.'

"Soon after a young fellow got up; he was perhaps thirty-five, and he said, 'I have just begun the Christian life. Two years ago I was converted; I had just begun business, and I had had a prejudice against religion. I am a great deal happier; I am a better business mn.'

"I listened to him," continued Mr. Wanamaker, "and I said to myself, 'There you are; you want to be a business man, and he tells you how you can be a better business man. He tells you that religion is good to live by. Another man tells you it's good to die by.' 'Now, do you intend ever to be a Christian?'" He answered the question in the affirmative and "Put On Christ."

Binding the Will (267).

"The chief way to practice virtues is not by a direct and formal reflection upon them, but by a virtuous and vigorous binding of the will to God."—Castaniza.

Moving Towards Christ (268).

"Faith is that great power in the holy soul by which it acts from God as a principle; love is that by which it acts towards him as an end; by that it draws from him; by this it moves to him and rests in him."—John Howe.

The Two Loves (269).

"Two loves have built two cities: the love of self reaching on to the contempt of God has built the city of the world; the love of God reaching on to the contempt of self has built the heavenly city. Let every one inquire of himself what he loveth; and he shall resolve himself of whence he is a citizen."—Augustine.

Paul's Conviction (270).

Paul understood the secret of a blessed and effective life.

He kept saying to himself, "He loved me, and gave himself up for me." He indulged in no exaggeration when he said, "For to me to live is Christ!" It was this secret which he was always striving to communicate to others. When he asked Christians to give money he reminded them of their Friend who, although rich, had made himself poor that they through his poverty might become rich. When he exhorted them to forgive one another he turned their eyes to One who for Christ's sake had forgiven them. It was his unshakable conviction that it is worth while to endure hardship and to suffer tribulation, for "if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him."—Charles E. Jefferson, D.D.

SERVICE XVIII.

Christian Love.

1 Corinthians 13: 13.

"The greatest of these is love."

Lesson:—1 Corinthians 13.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Love's nature:** "It is that kind of love which God has for us. It is that desire to give and to bless which is ready to bestow itself even where it meets with no response."
2. **Love's pre-eminence:** "The greatest of these."
3. **Love's cultivation:** By meditation upon God's love to us.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Receipt For Love. (271)—The spectrum of love has nine ingredients: . . . patience, kindness, generosity, humility, courtesy, unselfishness, good temper, guilelessness, sincerity; these make up the supreme gift, the stature of the perfect man. You will observe that all are in relation to men, in relation to life, in relation to the known today and the near tomorrow, and not to the unknown eternity. We hear much of love to God; Christ spoke much of love to man. We make a great deal of peace with heaven; Christ made much of peace on earth. Religion is not a strange or added thing, but the inspiration of the secular life, the breathing of an eternal spirit through this temporal world. The supreme thing, in short, is not a thing at all, but the giving of a further finish to the multitudinous words and acts which make up the sum of every common day.—Professor Drummond.

Love, the Foundation. (272)—If our religion is to be real and truly spiritual, it must be rooted and grounded in brotherly love. "He that hateth his brother can not know God," nor can he know man. The precious Christian quality of love will open the eyes of our spirits to the abiding beauty of every human soul, to the temptations resisted as well as those we have conquered, to the aspiration after something higher struggling like a plant in a dark dungeon toward the light, to the glorious possibilities, hidden in the being of every child of God. That clear perception of the good concealed within our brothers and sisters will help us to catch some bright glimpses of our Father in

heaven. It is human selfishness which hides the true nature of God's children, however degraded they may have become by their own fault or the fault of others, from our sight; it is the same deep, deadly shadow which darkens our own perception of God. Through brotherly love filial affection to God is born in human hearts, and when that sacred emotion has once filled our whole being, spiritual religion is known and loved.—Arthur W. Fox.

Love and Joy. (273)—Love—and that, too, love that binds and unites into one—is the source of human happiness. It is only as the heart opens and expands that life becomes truly human. Love expends itself, but in doing so it gathers tribute from every loved object. The tides of human joy flow into the heart that has been opened by God's all-embracing love. It makes its own heaven.—Christian Advocate.

No Religion without Love. (274)—Love is humble. It does not strut for admiration and praise, nor blow its own trumpet, nor put on airs of any kind. It does not try to get into places it is not fitted to fill. Love is refined, gentle, thoughtful, considerate. If any one makes religion unlovely, he is presenting only a caricature of it. Love is always courteous. "Love . . . seeketh not its own." The very essence of love is unselfishness. Just in the measure that we are truly loving, will we cease to think of ourselves.

Christ's Test. (275)—The world looks in vain for that one mark of discipleship which the Master laid down: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." The world holds aloof from the church, not because the world is wholly lacking in the religious spirit and temper, but because that distinguishing note of love is wanting in Christ's professed people, and the world has well-nigh lost respect for the church on that account.—Greenbough.

Love the Solvent. (276)—A present-day requirement is a more general spirit of sympathy and love; a spirit that can more quickly discern the virtues of others than their vices. We do not mean that the vices which others possess should be excused and condoned, but that we should not make them a standard whereby to pass judgment upon humanity as a whole, or upon any individual in particular. If we encourage the cultivation of the virtues then the vices, if not fostered, will gradually die away. It is impossible to get a white pigment by adding two

blacks together. The result of such a process would be continued blackness. In the same degree virtues will not result from the persistent dangling of a man's vices before his eyes. The better way to cure a man of vicious habits is to place virtue alongside of them. The contrast, which even the most depraved could not fail to see, will have a salutary effect. It is only as one sees the beauty of virtue that he is enabled to realize the hideous deformity and loathsomeness of his vices. What censure often fails to effect the spirit of sympathy will accomplish with incredible swiftness and ease.—Betts.

How to Love. (277)—We are commanded to love one another, and the intensely practical mind may inquire how we are to do it. Is love a matter of will, or is it a passion of the heart? Can we by a mere formal determination of mind change dislike to love? Can the hatred of enemies be suddenly and by mere force of volition turned into the warm regard of friends? A moment's reflection will disclose that these inquiries themselves are positive proof that the love in question must have its origin outside of our human nature. It is the gift of Christ's nature—a love that passeth understanding. As a matter of will we can seek the Christ nature, and in praying our way toward being like Christ we may find the beautiful path of love which leads to happiness. Love is a condition, not a mere emotion; it is a divine arrangement of our spiritual structure under the influence of Christian aspiration and endeavor. God is love; when his Spirit enters, love flames up the human heart and warms it toward all mankind. It is then that enemy and friend become indistinguishable, melted together into brotherhood and glorified in the splendor of infinite Christian sympathy.

Shedding Joy. (278)—This is the positive aspect of love; the doing of something good to everyone whenever an opportunity presents itself. No one is in such a position but that he or she can do something to help others, if it is only by being pleasant and cheerful in manner. We may not all be able to help others with our influence and money, but we can help with our sympathy, our good will, and kind words, if nothing more. Victor Hugo has said, "There is in this world no function more important than that of being charming. To shed joy around, to radiate happiness, to cast light upon dark days, is not this to render a service?" Yes, even in this way we can help others to better bear their burdens, and, in doing so, we are cultivating

at the same time a cheerful disposition for ourselves, and are forming what Wordsworth calls:

"That best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love."
—F. C. Baker, in "The Meaning of Life."

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Love Blossoms In Kindly Cheer (279).

Yellow fever was epidemic in New Orleans. From the French Market to the river, and all along the levee, and back through the old city, the terror spread. Everyone who could get away went, and those who remained, quarantined, sat down to a battle with death. To be in a city, yet cut off from the world, this, if anything, is isolation. To be surrounded with and dependent upon men and women, any one of whom may yet prove the source of a deadly contagion, this is the occasion of despair or even of madness.

But science has brought a ground of encouragement. Men need not fear each other, but the mosquito. And good sense and religion all united to emphasize the lesson; the city's salvation lay in united and unselfish effort for the common good.

Prominent among the workers was a young minister who had refused to flee from the city, and whose work day by day in the midst of danger brought comfort to the dying and hope to those in despair.

The health and the volunteer committees had been laboring to screen all cisterns and vaults where mosquitoes could breed, and had just about finished their work when a storm tore away the thin netting, and made innumerable new pools for the breeding of the fever-spreading pests.

Men heard the rain and wind in the night with sinking heart, and rose the next day to find their precautions vain and their labors futile. What was left, but to curse God and die?

It was on that morning that the headquarters of the committee flamed out a new motto, placarded there by the young minister:

"Wear a smile on your face and a flower in your buttonhole"

Men would not have heeded a sermon more dogmatically; but few could resist the persuasion of a homily so sensible and short. They pinned on the flower, smiled, and took heart, and

went about the hard duty of repairing the work the storm had destroyed. And now, as they look back upon those days of distress, it seems to them a message from heaven that came to them in their need—"Wear a smile on your face and a flower in your buttonhole."—The Presbyterian of the South.

Love Conquers Caste (280).

Leonidas Polk, the Bishop of Louisiana, was so gentle and kind in his private life that when one of his black slaves was dying, he was just as tender to him as if the black man had been his own flesh and blood. On the night on which the humble slave closed his eyes in death, the good bishop said, "Tom, is there anything else I can do for you?" The answer was: "Yes, massa. If you will only lie down by me on the bed, and put your arm around my neck, and let me put my arm around your neck, as we used to do when boys lying under the green walnut-trees, I think that I could die more easy." So the great Southern minister and leader lay down upon his slave's cot and held his black servant in his white arms until the white angel of death came down and took the soul from beneath the black skin.

The Master-Passion (281).

It is a man's master-passion that determines what his character and his achievement shall be. The student of whom Dr. W. M. Taylor told was not so very wild in his speaking when in delivering his trial sermon he said, "A Christian is one who forgets not the assemblying of himself together."

It is concentrated electricity that strikes, and it is a concentrated, masterful purpose that conquers opposing forces. There is enough energy stored up in fifty acres of sunshine, it is said, to run all the machinery in the world. Unquestionably in multitudes of human lives there is enough moral force and enough wisdom to make possible the achievement of tremendous results if this moral force and wisdom were but brought to bear on great matters for the highest ends.

The chief ambition of Columbus was the discovery of a new continent; hence his face was set westward. Napoleon's master-passion seemed to be self-aggrandizement; hence his domineering and tyrannous career. Livingstone's master-passion was the opening of a dark continent to civilization and Christian influences; hence his heroic and persistent missionary zeal. The master-passion of Paul, as revealed in these intimate words to personal friends, was Christ and Christlikeness for himself and

for all men; hence his unequalled devotion to Christ and his sublime character, rising above that of ordinary men like some o'ertopping Alp.—Don O. Shelton in Christian Endeavor World.

Love Understands (282).

Mr. Howells tells of a cab-driver in Florence in whose cab at nightfall he sent home a child to the hotel, from a distance. Being persistent in securing the driver's number, the cabman began to divine his reason, and so he replied to Mr. Howells, "Oh! rest easy, I, too, am a father!"

To Know Would Be To Love (283).

If only we knew what the weakest and worst had borne, if only we understood how they were tempted, if we could read the story of their secret battle, could fathom their wretchedness, could hear their cry; if only we realized that under that dull exterior there are heaven, hell, loneliness, cravings, love, I think we should cease despising in that hour. God understands all that, and therefore despises no one.—G. H. Morrison.

How To Cultivate Love (284).

There are, however, two methods by which we may cultivate this charity. 1. By doing acts which love demands. It is God's merciful law that feelings are increased by acts done on principle. If a man has not the feeling in its warmth, let him not wait till the feeling comes. Let him act with such feeling as he has; with a cold heart, if he has not got a warm one; it will grow warmer while he acts. You may love a man merely because you have done him benefits, and so become interested in him, till interest passes into anxiety, and anxiety into affection. You may acquire courtesy of feeling at last. 2. The second way of cultivating Christian love is by contemplating the love of God.—F. W. Robertson.

Love's Power (285).

Napoleon once said: "I win nothing but battles; and Josephine, by her goodness, wins all hearts."

Horace, speaking of Virgil, says: "My friend is to me as my own soul;" Chrysostom said: "Have but one enemy—the devil. With him never be reconciled; with thy brother never fall out."

SERVICE XIX.

The Cross As Love's Necessity.
Matthew 27: 42.

"He saved others, himself he cannot save."
Lesson:—Isaiah 53: 10-12.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **The way of the cross was the only way to win salvation** for the world.

2. **The way of the cross**—self-sacrifice and self-expenditure—is the only way by which man can win the greatest good for man.

3. **Let us be willing to suffer** to serve even as Christ was willing to suffer to save.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Rising Sacrifices. (286)—It may be an avenue to lead us into the grace and power of the sacrifice of Jesus, and a persuasive to our acceptance of his propitiation, if we can realize how universal, how beneficent, and, in its higher forms, how beautiful is this truth of the necessity of sacrifice in salvation. Let us examine it in the various spheres of its working. Let us see that every gain and every good which has been brought to men—either to individuals or to the race—has been achieved through a corresponding sacrifice. Let us mark that this sacrifice is always proportional—the greater and the more spiritual the good, the greater and the more spiritual its cost. Then we may understand why the redemption of the human soul was wrought only by the sacrifice of the Eternal Son of God.—Rev. William Clow.

Cross-bearing. (287)—Are you bearing the cross? How are you bearing it? The cross carried by some pilgrims seems heavy as would a rough oaken cross, bolted rudely together, with cruel corners and splintery sides, and hard to carry. After bearing the cross many years, some find it just as rude and heavy as at first; but many others began early to wind around its rigid form the graces of faith, and hope, and charity; they covered it, too, with temperance, and justice, and fortitude. So to them it is no longer a rough and heavy oaken cross, galling and hard to bear, but like the rod of Aaron, it now blossoms like the rose.

Surely the cross of the Christian ought to fill his life with joy and beauty, and enrich his character with heavenly graces. Have you thus borne the cross of Christ?—Bennett.

Denying Self. (288)—To share in the benefits of Christ's sacrifice is most truly to sacrifice ourselves. Whatever his sacrifice expresses we desire to take and use as the only satisfactory expression of our own aims and desires. Did Christ perfectly submit to and fulfil the will of God? So would we. Was there on his part a meek resignation of every desire which would run counter to God's will; was he led as a lamb to the slaughter guileless, as little thinking of evading God's will as if he knew not what was before him? So would we obey, yielding ourselves without reserve to God.—Dods.

God's Will. (289)—Sickness is discouraging. It is disheartening not to be able to do the heroic things that the spirit yearns to do. Life seems to be useless. The days seem lost in which no active service can be done for the Master. Sometimes persons suffering thus from illness, laid aside or broken so as to be equal to but little, lose out of the heart the joy, the peace, the hope, the enthusiasm, and become depressed, unhappy, cast down, sometimes almost despairing.

But this is not victorious Christian life. The lesson for such is that the noblest thing in life is always the doing of God's will. That is greater than any heroism, greater than the largest service one can render, greater than any toil and sacrifice. Let us accept our limitations. Let us not repine and chafe when God shuts us in a sick-room.

Fickle Crowds. (290)—On one day in the week the Jewish rabble wanted to crown the Nazarene, and before the week had ended they cried: "Crucify him, crucify him."

Unless popularity is based upon character, the possessor has absolutely no assurance of the morrow. And even though he may have a noble character and is popular today, there is no assurance, should duty call him to oppose measures dear to the people, that he will not be crucified tomorrow.—R. V. Hunter, D. D.

The Need of the World. (291)—A Japanese graduate of an institution in our country was enjoying a position of comfort and influence. But in the Russo-Japanese war the call was borne in upon him that he should go to Manchuria to help the Christians working among the soldiers. He obeyed the call, and went

farther inland than the others, although suffering much from the coarse food and privations of army life. One morning he awoke deaf, and was found to be in an advanced stage of typhoid fever. Such was the love for him in the army that he was placed in the officers' ward, where at last he began to recover. One day he drew a small book out and read from it. The officers in the ward noticed a look of peace on his face after he read. "Comrade," they said, "if there is any good in that book we need it, too. Will you read it to us?" The weak man told the gospel story, and the others welcomed it. So it happened that when he was well enough to be moved to the coast, at each successive stage there was some man who, having heard the story from him the preceding night, asked for it again, and the convalescent left a trail behind him of seed sown in weakness and suffering. He died in Japan as a result of the exposures he had suffered, but he died gladly.—The Sunday School Times.

Chastening. (292)—God delivers us out of evils by turning them into greater good. He chastens us in the world that we may not be condemned with the world. He turns the tears of sorrow into the pearls of a brighter crown. By weaning us from the transitory, he leads us to the eternal. By emptying us of the world, he fills us with himself. He makes the via crucis the via lucis. He causes us, in the very fire, to thank him that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us and for others, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—Dean Farrar.

Bearing Our Cross. (293)—While no option is left us as to bearing the cross, we may either take it up, or strive to push it off. We may, on the one hand, harbor the thought that we are hardly dealt with; or, on the other, we may, by enforcing upon ourselves such considerations as that God is a tender Father, and never chastens but for our profit; that suffering is a medicine, remedial, though bitter; that we have deserved infinitely more than is ever laid upon us; and that there is no real satisfaction for man except in conformity to the Divine Will.

Rising On Our Defeats. (294)—This great truth is disclosed in sorrows as well as in successes. How differently do men meet their reverses. Some find no good in them while others always profit by them. The Christian spirit enables one to snatch some victory out of every defeat and find as did Samson some honey in the slain lion. Sorrows and reverses of them-

selves are not helpful, but there is no misfortune which may not prove helpful to the one with the right spirit. With it we become more than conquerors through Him who loved us. Yonder on the sea the ships so trim their sails and adjust the rudders that they ever sail forward. Even the contrary wind is changed into a blessing. Religion so sets the sails and rudder of life that everything helps one. When one loves God and receives in return the divine life, then all things are of use in helping the life forward and one is a master in the world with all things to do him service.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Our Crosses (295).

Tom Sexton was a "Blacksmith Evangelist" in the South, an ignorant man whose genuine religious experience told over and over in the crudest language, led many, even learned doctors and lawyers, to seek and find the same Father. This is the way Tom Sexton in one of his meetings described a Bible scene: "I can just imagine Paul and Silas there with their feet in the stocks and their backs all cut up and bleeding, and everything looking like it was against them, death seeming to be in front of them; and Paul says, 'Strike up a hymn, Silas.' But Silas says, 'My back's hurting me so, and they've got the stocks round my feet so tight, that I can't sing.' Then Paul says, 'Well, we've got to have a hymn, if I start it up myself.' I don't know what hymn Paul started up," continued the blacksmith, "but I believe if they knew this hymn, it would be this:

"'Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No, there's a cross for ev'ryone,
And there's a cross for me.'"

Won by One (296).

In one of his sermons at Winona Bible Conference, Dr. Gunsaulus told a story of the life of a wealthy Chicago manufacturer, now deceased, which affected his audience well-nigh to tears. It is impossible to reproduce—particularly in this limited space—the effect of Dr. Gunsaulus' pathetic telling of this biography, but the outstanding facts of the story are these, in brief:

When a boy in Vermont the subject of the story was tormented by the jeers of his schoolmates, who taunted him with

questions about when his father would be home from jail. He had no recollection of his father and when he asked his mother what these jeers meant she had no answer for him save her weeping.

But at length the father came home, and the growing boy entered into the bitterness of the grown man's soul as the ex-convict sought through the community in vain for employment. From his own little bedroom the lad heard his father and mother praying out of the anguish of poverty for God to send work by which the husband could earn a living for his loved ones. And slipping from his bed to his knees, the boy vowed before God that if his father was given work now he would devote his life to see that other men from prison got a chance to earn a living.

In his young manhood the boy came to Chicago. He prospered and grew very rich. But as his wealth increased his religious faith seemed to slip from him, and he was greatly troubled by his doubts of the doctrines of the church. Especially was the atonement a puzzle to him, and for years he made it a point to attend conferences and religious assemblages where the atonement was to be discussed by eminent theologians.

At length Dr. Gunsaulus, counseling, as his pastor, said to the man: "Is there not some thing particular in which you have made less sacrifice for your fellow men than you should have done? You will never have faith in the atonement that is vital until you have yourself imitated in some way the sacrifice of Christ."

Then of a sudden there rolled back over the rich man's heart the memory of the vow of his boyish days, unkept till then. At midnight he arose and went to the house of his pastor: "I'll do it. I'll begin in the morning."

Next morning he wrote to the warden of a great penitentiary, asking to have a released convict sent to him. The man came and met the clasp of the hand of honest brotherhood. The manufacturer sent him far into the West to nail up advertising signs, and gave him good wages.

Then he got another man from another penitentiary and sent him out in the same way. One after another he set on their feet such ex-prisoners to a clean, true life. And he told no one of them of any of the others.

But they ran across one another as they traveled, and when they told each other how they had been lifted up out of their

common pit of perdition by the same loving hand they couldn't help forming a brotherhood. They wrote circle letters which went the rounds among themselves. and the rich manufacturer in Chicago was one of the circle.

Then disease laid hold on the philanthropist, and month after month led him nearer the jaws of death. But he had no more doubts about the atonement to confuse him. He trusted One who had done for him more than he had done for his fellow men. And he died in the calmest of trust—a triumph of spiritual peace.

Dr. Gunsaulus said he was rushing to catch a suburban train to go to the dead man's home for the funeral. "May I go out to the funeral with you—the wife and the boy and I?"

The man who spoke was tall and rugged, dressed in the rough garb of a ranchman. "Who are you?" said the minister.

"Oh, I was from Jackson, Mich. I live out in South Dakota now. I came for the boys—came to be at the funeral. This is my wife. This is my boy, named after him. Six of us have got boys with his name now."

"Of course he went to the funeral," said Dr. Gunsaulus. "And he went to the grave. After the coffin was lowered the big man in the coarse leather clothes brought seventeen white carnations and dropped them into the grave—seventeen white flowers for seventeen white souls! And the wife and boy came and dropped in flowers, too; that was for their home and all other homes which this man had made possible."—Michigan Christian Advocate.

Songs in the Night (297).

Christianity brings gladness, so deep that it breaks forth in trial and brings "songs in the night"—the blackest night of sorrow, or darkness, or danger, or death. Always, in every century, Christians, exulting in the grace, power and love of Christ, have lifted their glad praises to God in the nights appointed by him. Perpetua, the martyr, declared "her dungeon a palace." "Ein Feste Burg" was written by Luther in one of the darkest hours of the Reformation. In our own day, the martyrs in China sang in triumph as they died. Where Christ is in the heart, there thousands, with faces of peace and light, sing in the nights of sorrow, sickness, disappointment. Only Christ can help you to "rejoice in tribulation," and pay cheerfully the price of love's sacrifices.

SERVICE XX.

The Joy of Trust.

Romans 15: 13.

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing."

Lesson 8: 31-39.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Faith is the certainty of God's all-sufficiency.** His (1) Omnipotence, (2) Omniscience, (3) Infinite love.
2. Therefore faith floods the heart with (1) Joy, (2) Peace.
3. This faith is the **Gift of God.**
4. Open your hearts for his **"filling."**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Live By Faith. (300)—"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God." This is Christ's cure for fretfulness. He offers for healing the balm of trust in a Father's care and watchful interest.

If today you have money enough to purchase present necessities, Faith says, fret not thyself in fear that you will fetch up at the almshouse. If today your children gather about your hearth, Faith says, enjoy the music of their happy voices; gather confidence from their unquestioning trust; train them for God, and trust them to his care without tormenting your soul with the fear that death might bear them from you, or, if they live, that some dire calamity may ruin their lives. If today you are in the enjoyment of health and rejoice in strength "as a strong man to run a race," Faith says, let not your heart be troubled with fear of possible ills. To worry and to fret is but to hasten their coming. With each new morn Faith comes and says: "I will bear the burdens and overcome the foes of this day, and to its close I will cheer your heart with the song:

"Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me."

—Rev. Elmer E. Higley.

Love and Reason. (301)—The intuition of love is more accurate than the logic of reason. And it is so much quicker, too. A look, a smile, a rush, and lover and beloved are in each other's embrace! A look, a smile of joy, a quick run to the Cross

and the past is forgotten in a twinkling. Life in its heaven-wide abundance is yours! You feel it now. You know you are saved. "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine" is the new song of your daily life. You know by the sweetest experience on earth that you are saved. You can be just as sure of it as the bride and bridegroom are sure of each other's love. Do not wait, then, for the parade of logic and the dignified cogitations of intellect. Love Jesus, and your intellect will pronounce a blessing on the union!—Rev. Alfred L. Hall-Quest.

Peace in the Heart (302).

If peace be in the heart,
The wildest winter storm is full of beauty,
The midnight lightning flash but shows the path of duty,
Each living creature tells some new and joyous story,
The very trees and stones all cast a ray of glory,
If peace be in the heart.

—Charles F. Richardson.

God Loves Me. (303)—Think of it—God is love; you can lift up your heart today and say, God loves me. Think of it—all your sins are pardoned—washed away in the blood of Jesus Christ. Think of it—you are the object of God's care, and he will never leave you nor forsake you, and neither death nor hell can ever touch you, for you are his and he is yours for ever. Is that the kind of news to make one gloomy? Is that the kind of news to make one miserable? I tell you that if you only realized it you would rise up in your place and shout for joy. God help us all to realize it better—to feel the wonder and glory of it more, till each of us rises with the Lord Jesus Christ into the experience of joy and peace!—Rev. G. H. Morrison.

Praying Into the Calm. (304)—In certain moods we lose sight of the fact that peace is not of our own making or our own earning; it is Christ's free gift, yet if we want it it is worth asking for. "Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find." I read the other day of a Scottish divine who was never contented to stop praying until he was sure he had an audience with God. He did not simply pray and go away, leaving the prayer at the altar, but he continued in prayer until he knew that God was giving him an answer then and there. A friend not long ago told me that, no matter how restless and weary she might be when she knelt at her nightly prayer, she never stopped praying until a blessed calm had possessed her soul. "When he giveth

quietness who then can make trouble?" Whosoever cares to receive the blessing of peace must go for it daily to him who is the Prince of Peace.—The Christian Intelligencer.

Into Higher Currents. (305)—If we could only rise into the heavenly atmosphere of souls awake to the reality of God's love and the wisdom of his will, we should have a peace that the world could not give, no matter what treasures or pleasures it bestowed upon us—a heart brimming over with joy that no tumult or disaster of time could disturb.

Work but Don't Worry. (306)—Anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, but it empties today of its strength. It brings a double weakness, for it makes us feeble in today's endeavors and faint-hearted for the future. Jesus warns against anxious thought as one of the insidious dangers to which we are constantly exposed. Faith in God furnishes the great defense against the gnawing and destructive effects of "carking care." Thoughts of God's sovereignty, of his love, of his grace, and of his power will steady the heart and stay the soul against the ravages of anxiety.—Christian Observer.

On Christ's Heart. (307)—What a precious word for the weary is this, "Cast your care upon him, for he careth for you." I need hardly inform intelligent readers that this verse literally reads: "For he has you on his heart." He who piloted the patriarch through the deluge, and fed the prophet by the brook, and supplied the widow's cruse, and watched over the imprisoned apostle, and numbers every hair of our heads, he has every one of us on his great, almighty heart! What fools we are to tire ourselves out and break ourselves down, while such an all-powerful helper is close by our side! Suppose that a weary traveler who is trudging up hill were overtaken by a wagon, whose owner kindly said to him: "My friend, you look tired; throw that knapsack into my wagon; it will rest you, and I will see that it is safe." Imagine the foolish pedestrian eyeing him suspiciously, and blurting out the churlish reply: "I can't trust you, sir; drive along; I'll carry my own luggage." But this is the way that tens of thousands of Christians treat God.—Dr. Cuyler.

Keep Still (308).

"O Lord, my God, do Thou Thy holy Will!
I will lie still:
I will not stir, lest I forsake Thine arm,

And break the charm,
Which lulls me, clinging to my Father's breast,
In perfect rest."

Don't Fret. (309)—Our life is but a handbreadth. Eternity, eternity, how long art thou! The soul that has just gone from the vicissitudes of time into the glories of the unseen world looks back and wonders; wonders, above all, that the pains and heartaches seemed so vast and insufferable. They are "light." They are "but for a moment." The pearly gates throw their light this way. The hands of angels beckon to a world where tears are wiped away forever. We can wait and be patient. "Bide a wee and dinna fret." Heaven is not far off.

Thus we set out, shod with the preparation of the gospel, to meet the tasks and duties and sorrows of the year. "Fear not," saith the Lord, "I will be with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."—David James Burrell, D. D.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Safe from Harm (310).

At one of his prayer meetings in Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, during the excitement of his great trial, I heard Henry Ward Beecher tell the following story of his experience in the hot anti-slavery times. He and others had been making addresses in a public hall, when a mob made an assault upon them. The speakers were let out of the building by a back way, but were followed by the excited mob. He entered a house, but the mob arriving thought they were in another house across the way. Mr. Beecher from his safe shelter saw them raging around that house, throwing stones and rotten eggs at its windows and doors. "But," said he, "it did not harm me, for I was not there."—Peloubet.

Her Last Resort (311).

A small steam packet was crossing a stormy bay. Her engine suddenly stopped. For a little while the peril was great. An old lady rushed to the captain to ask him if there was any danger. "Madam," he replied, "we must trust in God." "Oh, dear!" she cried, "has it come to that?" A good many Christians are like that terrified lady. In times of great peril they are willing to trust in everything except God.—A. C. Price.

Who May Trust (312).

A college student, in decorating his room, "bought a brass plate mounted on a wooden block, which he hung above his fireplace. It had a picture of certain young fellows in evening dress, with feet on tables, and with smoke and other evidences of reckless gayety, and under the picture this legend, intended to be illustrative of the sentiment of the engraving: "Motto of the Don't-Worry Club: This is God's world—not ours."

His father came to visit him, and when they were settled for a quiet talk, he referred to the motto.

"I don't mean to take a thing of that sort too seriously," said he to Will, "but I do not quite like the influence of such a motto on your own life or that of your friends. If this is God's world, the gay young fellows in that picture have some reason to sit up and do some sober thinking; for God does not enjoy that sort of thing. If this is God's world, that sort of motto has no very good place in it. This is God's world, my boy, and it is also ours. No man has a right to kick the world along toward the devil and comfort himself with the thought that the world is God's. This is God's world, and it is our privilege to discover God's place in it for each of us, and help to achieve God's purpose in the world."—Youth's Companion.

The Vision We Might Have (313).

I have not the shadow of doubt that if all our eyes could be opened today, we should see our homes, and our places of business and the streets we traverse, filled with the "chariots of God." There is no need for any one of us to walk for lack of chariots. That cross inmate of your household, who has hitherto made life a burden to you, and who has been the Juggernaut car to crush your soul into dust, may henceforth be a glorious chariot to carry you to the heights of heavenly patience and long-suffering. That misunderstanding, that mortification, that unkindness, that disappointment, that loss, that defeat—all these are chariots waiting to carry you to the very heights of victory you have so longed to reach. Mount into them, then, with thankful hearts and lose sight of all second causes in the shining of his love who will carry you in his arms and triumphantly over it all.—H. W. Smith.

Happiness (314).

The habit of being happy is one that can be deliberately formed and encouraged. It can be begun at any time, by any

person, in almost any circumstances. Crushing sorrows come to every one, but at least one can wear one's mourning inside, and refrain from being a blot on other people's sunshine. And the happy habit, once established, is one that persists even in trouble and trial and loneliness and poverty, like those Alpine roses that bloom above the snows. One must begin young and train himself up in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

They Know Him (315).

Suppose you had a sickness ten years ago. If you understand what it was that cured you then, the memory of that sickness is a power, and you see a new sickness of the same sort coming with less fear. Suppose you escaped in some great business crisis five years ago. If your escape seems to you a lucky accident, you tremble when you see a new business crisis coming, for it is not likely such a lucky accident can happen twice. "I escaped," you say, "but I cannot hope to get off safe again." But if you knew how you escaped, if the old struggle was to you a revelation of great principles that rule the business world, and which as a new need occurs comes back to you familiarly, then the old recollection is a power. Filled with its inspiration, you go on bravely to meet the now intelligible danger. They that in trouble struggled in prayer with God until they knew him, and gained his answers, are ever peaceful and strong before other troubles, for they know him sure, steadfast, ever helpful.

To Conquer Worrying (316).

Consider what must be involved in the truth that God is infinite, and that you are a part of his plan.

Memorize some of the Scripture promises, and recall them when the temptation to worry returns.

Cultivate a spirit of gratitude for daily mercies.

Realize that it has never done, and never can do, the least good. It wastes vitality, and impairs the mental faculties.

Help and comfort your neighbor.

Forgive your enemies, and conquer your aversions.

The world is what we make it. Forward, then! Forward in the power of faith; forward in the power of truth; forward in the power of friendship; forward in the power of freedom; forward in the power of hope; forward in the power of God!—Bishop J. H. Vincent.

SERVICE XXI.

The Book of Books.

Psalms 119: 18.

"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

Lesson:—Psalms 119: 1-16.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **God's Word** is the great treasure house of **God's truth.**
2. **Only God can give** us the spiritual vision essential to its understanding.
3. God will give vision in answer to **believing prayer.**

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1. **By nature we are blind** to the spiritual truth hidden in God's Word.
2. **Only God** can open our eyes.
3. Opened eyes behold **wondrous visions** of: (1) **Christ** our Saviour, (2) God our **Father,** (3) **Heaven** our home.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

The Bible. (319)—This Book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of life, the doom of sinners, the happiness of believers. Read it to be wise. Believe it to be safe. Practice it to be holy.

It gives light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you.

It is the traveler's map, the soldier's sword, the Christian's chart.

Here Paradise is restored; Heaven is opened and the gates of hell described. Christ is its Theme, our good its design and the glory of God its end.

It should fill the memory, rule the heart and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully.

It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, a river of pleasure.

It is given us in life; will be open in judgment, and remembered forever.

It involves the highest responsibility, rewards the greatest labor, and condemns all who trifle with it.

The Bible sets forth two things—the Cross and the Throne.

The Old Testament points toward the Cross. The Gospel tells the story of the Cross.

The Epistles point toward the Throne. The Revelation tells the story of the Throne.

The Old Testament tells us what sin leads to and ends with the words: "Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Malachi 4:6).

The New Testament shows the way out of sin and ends thus: "The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all" (Rev. 22:21).—From the fly leaf of D. L. Moody's Bible.

Bible Reading. (320)—Especially let us remember not to neglect any portion of the Bible; it should be read regularly through. To read favorite portions of the Scriptures, to the exclusion of other parts, is a habit to be avoided. The whole Divine volume is inspired, and by degrees should be read regularly through. But to read the Bible thus is not enough; we must seek to become intimately and experimentally acquainted with him whom the Scriptures reveal, with the blessed Jesus who has given himself to die in our room and stead. Oh, what an abiding, soul-satisfying portion do we possess in him.

The Guide. (321)—The one who would have real success in bringing men to Christ, must have a working knowledge of the Bible. . . . If we would work together with God, the Bible is the instrument upon which we must rely, and which we must use in bringing men to Christ. We must know how to use the Bible so as (1) to show men their need of a Saviour, (2) to show them Jesus as the Saviour they need, (3) to show them how to make this Saviour their own Saviour, (4) to meet the difficulties that stand in the way of their accepting Christ. . . . "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you," said Jesus to his disciples after having given them the great commission to go out and bring men to himself. The supreme condition of soul-winning power is the same today, —"After that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."—Rev. R. A. Torrey, in "How To Bring Men to Christ."

Book To Be Believed (322).

"This Book, this holy Book, on every line
Marked with the seal of high Divinity,
On every leaf bedewed with drops of love;
This Lamp from off the everlasting throne,

Mercy took down, and in the night of Time
Stood, casting in the dark her gracious bow:
And evermore beseeching men, with tears
And earnest sighs, to read, believe, and live."

Daily Bread. (323)—The Bible should be the Christian's daily bread. A child, to grow in size and strength, must have good food and plenty of it. So the Christian must feed plentifully upon God's Word. Moreover, he must feed with appetite. The child that finds no pleasure in three meals a day needs medicine, or exercise, more than food. So the Christian who does not find God's Word sweet to the taste, should look for the cause of his distaste.—Sermons for Silent Sabbaths.

The Book Divine. (324)—We ought to avoid ever repeating any jests which play with Bible language. Many cheap and unworthy associations have been attached to great words or phrases by such jests. We ought not to perpetuate or support them.

How many Bible verses can you repeat?

In quoting the Bible we ought never to cheapen it or use it as a fetish. It is powerful because it is the truth of God, and for no other reason.

Young people would do well to learn one new verse each day, and to learn to live it also.

Tonic For Christians. (325)—Let me beg all to be Bible-loving, Bible-reading Christians. If they are weak, the Bible will make them strong; if they are ignorant, the Bible will build them up in the truth; if they are assailed by doubts and criticisms, the Bible will dispel them as the mists of the morning melt away before the sun in his splendor. Do they desire to know more about Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge? the Bible is the one place to seek for such wisdom. Are they among those who know not if there be any Holy Spirit? they will never say so if they read their Bibles. Are the lusts of the flesh strong within them? here they learn how the flesh has been buried and they find their Christian privileges in a resurrection life. Is our earthly pilgrimage one of sore trials? here we find that we are seated in Christ in the heavenlies, and heaven has begun on earth for all who love the will of God above all else.

"O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord." "Man

shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."—The Intercollegian (Y. M. C. A.)

Bible Gets Covered. (326)—A reason for our neglect of the Bible itself is our absorption in the ephemeral literature of the time. We stack our tables with papers and magazines, and litter them with the last novels, which we say we never have time enough to read And, naturally, the Bible gets covered over with the mass of daily print, and we say still more regretfully that we can not find time to read it. The remedy for this is a simple one. Take time to read the Bible, and let the daily "literature" have the scraps of time. It is the remedy which will be applied whenever we come to a genuine desire to taste the divine Word again.—Presbyterian.

The Bible Answers Critics. (327)—Some time ago a friend was stopping with us in our home. Although brought up under Christian influences, he was inclined to be skeptical and to turn from God's Word. Naturally we fell into conversation on Christian topics, and as we talked along, we presented the Scriptures in answer to his excuses and objections. Question after question came up and was discussed, the Word on our part, being used in each case. At last our friend, annoyed at the defeat with which he was meeting, spoke up somewhat sharply, and said, "Oh, shut up that book; every time you open it you beat me." We may add that we did not shut up the book, but were encouraged to keep it open and to use it the more, in meeting the excuses and objections of our friend.—Harold Sayles.

Like a Bell. (328)—"Beyond all question and by the consent of all men, the Bible has a voice of peculiar and irresistible majesty. Like the deep, mellow sound of a bell floating out from a cathedral tower on the violet sky of Italy and arresting, for a brief moment at least, the confused babel of the carnival below, so does the bell-note of this book fall on the restless questions and fretful anxieties of the soul. Hearers are of a sudden hushed into reverence and are graciously inclined to submission, not by the say-so of a fallible preacher, but because the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Book Our Mothers Read (329).

We search the earth for truth, we cull
The good, the pure, the beautiful,
From graven stone and written scroll,
From the flower-fields of the soul;

And weary seekers for the best,
We come back laden from our quest
To find that all the sages said
Is in the Book our mothers read.
—Whittier.

Key to the Bible. (330)—It is very certain that we cannot attain to the understanding of Scripture by study or by intellect. Your first duty is to begin by prayer, entreating the Lord to grant you of his great mercy the true understanding of his Word. There is no other interpreter to this Word, as he himself hath said, "They shall all be taught of God." Hope for nothing from your own labors, from your own understanding. Trust solely in God and in the influence of his Spirit. Believe this on the word of a man who has had experience.—Luther.

Bible Devotee. (331)—Writing of F. R. Havergal, her sister says: "She read her Bible at her study-table by seven in the summer and eight in the winter. Sometimes, on bitterly cold mornings, I begged she would read with her feet comfortably to the fire, and received the reply: 'But then, Marie, I can't rule my lines neatly; just see what a find I've got.'"

Time For Bible. (332)—"Diligently, prayerfully, 'daily,' let us explore its depths for hidden treasure. We must take time for the study of the Word, or the devil will cheat us out of it. If General Havelock had to march at six, he would rise at four, that he might have an uninterrupted hour with his Bible. An able Bible student, who has read the New Testament through every month for the last thirty-five years, said, 'It was far fresher the last time I read it than the first.' A girl accustomed to spend a certain time each morning in reading mental philosophy, decided to employ the same amount of time each day in reading the Bible. The first morning she was surprised to find that she had read through the book of Romans. Another, constantly reads it questioning, 'How can I apply this to my life? Am I guilty of this wrong? Is this the prayer of my heart?'"

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Living Seeds (333).

St. Peter speaks of a Word that "liveth and abideth for ever," and we often construe his text after the analogy of a sleeping seed. It was once assumed that the wheat in Egyptian tombs retained its vital germ for thousands of years, and might

be made to sprout again. The romantic fancy has not been verified. The seed of the Divine Word is not mummy wheat. It is true that there is an imperishable germ in the Word, but the germ never sleeps. It is always operative. Our privilege is not scantier than that of one of old who said, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints; but let them not turn again to folly." God is immanent in the Word. It is an organ of his holy and mysterious Being, and it was not without cause that the writer of this epistle gives us a description of the Word which is scarcely distinguishable from a description of the personality of God himself.—Rev. T. G. Selby.

His Staff (334).

"Riding up to the right, I found that hostilities had ceased; that the ambulance corps of both armies were gathering up the wounded in the field near the Dunker Church. Going out over the ground where the tide had ebbed and flowed, I found it thickly strewn with dead. I recall a Union soldier lying near the Dunker Church with his face turned towards heaven, his pocket-Bible open upon his breast. I lifted the book and read the words, 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me. Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.' Upon the fly-leaf were the words, 'We hope and pray that you may be permitted by a kind Providence after the war is over to return.' "—Report of Correspondent.

"The Great Book" (335).

A missionary in Canada once looked up from his desk where he was writing to see his room filled with Indians. They had entered so quietly that he had not heard them coming. He asked them whence they came. "We came a distance of fourteen nights," they answered, for they reckoned distance by the number of nights on the way. "We have the Great Book which we can read, but we can not understand." He asked them what missionary had taught them to read, and they replied that they had never seen a missionary. They lived in the Hudson Bay region, hundreds of miles away from the nearest missionary station, but their hunting grounds adjoined those of Christian Indians, and from them they had heard about the Great Book. "They read and explained it to us," said these men, "and last winter we all learned to read, every one in our village." The

missionary could scarcely believe that they had learned to read without a white teacher, but when he opened the book, which they had obtained from an agent of the Hudson Bay Company, he found their words were true, they could read easily and correctly. Like the Ethiopian treasurer, they wanted a guide, and they had traveled a distance of fourteen nights over the snow to find one.—Tarbell.

Stanley and His Bible (336).

Before I met Henry M. Stanley I had talked with men who had been under him in his African expeditions, and all they told me about him was more or less appalling. He was not inhuman; but in desperate straits he spared neither man nor beast, nor would he defer to the counsel or the pleas of others or have any patience with less than instant and unquestioning obedience to his orders under all circumstances. He would not forbear under arguments or excuses, or relax his severity by any familiarity or pleasantries even when his object had been gained. He was both despot and martinet—stern, exacting, uncompromising, silent, humorless, inscrutable, Cromwellian.

"I cannot say we loved him," one of his lieutenants said to me. "We were all afraid of him, but we all believed in him. When he hadn't his rifle in hand, he had his Bible. No matter where our camp was, or how long and distressing our march had been, he never missed his bath and shave in the morning."—William H. Rideing, in McClure's.

An Expanding Bible (337).

A little boy was sent away from the table for some misdemeanor and told to stand outside the dining-room door five minutes as a punishment. He obeyed with the tears streaming down his cheeks. His little sister pitying him, begged him to allow her to take his place for the remaining time and pushed him inside the dining-room, where he stood with downcast eyes until the time expired, when both children were folded to the father's breast and pardon freely bestowed. He thought he should never forget the passage of Scripture, "And the door was shut," but he did. Years passed. That boy became an engineer, and was in a mine, when a fearful explosion occurred. He ordered one hundred and twenty men to remain with him behind a closed iron door to keep out the fire-damp and poisonous gases. Here out of the experience of a child and again by a

different experience of a mature man this text got different but in each case significant interpretations. The Bible can be understood only in the light of experience.—Homiletic Review.

She Knew the Author (338).

"I do not agree with you about the meaning of that poem," said one friend to another with her finger upon a page of Browning. "But you must agree with me," said he, "because I knew Browning personally, and therefore am able to interpret him to you." Only a little later this boastful friend of the poet began to chaff the lady upon what he called her superstitious belief in the Bible, calling it a pack of fables. "Ah, now," said she gently, "you must give way to me about this book. Remember, I know the author!"—The Christian Endeavor World.

The Barred Book (339).

The only book in literature forbidden in American schools is the Bible. It is the only book in literature containing first-hand teaching concerning personal, immanent God. Every philosophy is freely taught in our schools except the philosophy of Jesus. When we consider the general present enlightenment, I am ready to maintain that never, in any period or in any nation, has there been seen a policy so bigoted, so prejudiced, so subversive of public morals, as the barring of the Bible from the schools. I suppose ours is the only nation on earth whose schools are entirely divorced from religion. But a worse fact is, we are proud of it!—Wallace Nutting, D.D.

SERVICE XXII.

A Forgiving Spirit.

Mark 11:26.

"But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."

Lesson:—Matthew 18:21-25.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. A different duty.
2. A terrible condition.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Forgive and Forget. (340)—The true forgetting is in keeping with the genuine forgiving. As helps to the attainment of the forgiving spirit and its fruits in the life, let us remember our proneness to transgress the perfect commands of our Heavenly Father and our need of forgiveness from him. Have we asked him in sincerity to forgive us for our failures in this regard? When we have so asked for divine forgiveness, and have put forth greater effort to keep the commandments which Jesus emphasized, have we not felt that the petition has been granted? The strongest evidence of this forgiveness is our willingness to forgive others and our desire that they shall realize our friendliness toward them and our readiness to serve them. It is impossible for the unforgiving spirit to have the consciousness that its own sins are forgiven.—Rev. I. J. Mead.

Sending Away Sin. (341)—But were there no bounds to forgiveness at all? In Luke 17:3, 4, the Lord said, "If thy brother repent, forgive him." Does He mean that if our brother does not repent we are not to forgive him? Surely not, and yet surely so. The word translated here "forgive" means literally to let off or to send away; and to let off or send away a trespass or sin necessitates a mutual desire to get rid of it. Jesus could not send out of a man's life a sin the man wanted to retain; and we cannot obliterate an offense that the offender will not let go. Our attitude can only be one of readiness to forgive on our part.

Forgive in Love. (342)—God's forgiveness is a loving forgiveness. It is his expression, and our experience of that infinite love wherewith he has loved us. Do we so forgive those who

have injured us? Does our forgiveness carry with it all the affection of our loving hearts? Or does it leave the sense of a chill, a separation? God's forgiveness covers all, reaches to the uttermost, for all that come to him in the name of the Sinbearer. And with his forgiveness comes the welcome back to God and to all the unsearchable riches of communion and fellowship.—Journal and Messenger.

Forgive from the Heart. (343)—Our real motive to forgive, and our power, lie in our forgiveness first by God. I speak of real forgiveness, what Christ calls forgiveness from the heart. And I mean forgiveness of a real wrong, of what we bitterly feel as a wrong, what is past human nature to forgive. I do not speak of little offenses and trifling insults, real or fancied, but of great wrong embittering the soul to the center, and the soul too, of the strong, to forgive which we should at once confess was beyond our power. I speak of the forgiveness which is the greatest tax on our moral resource, and shows its weakness most. I mean the one triumph above all others for which the grace of God is needed, and where it shows itself as really grace. To forgive in this way is a superhuman power. "You can not," you say, and you go regretfully away. Of course you can not. It can only be done by the forgiving God within you. It takes much forgiveness of you to raise you to that. It is no light matter, no case of good nature, or short memory, or generous contempt. It is a case of a new heart and a new will.

"I can not forgive," you say, and you comfort yourself by the conclusion that there are things you are not called upon to forgive. But Christ will not allow that. You must part either with your rancor or your Redeemer. "I can not forgive," you say and feel. Then your prayer, if you continue to pray, must be, "Forgive me, that I can not forgive." This shows at least that you acknowledge the duty. It is glorifying the spirit of forgiveness which you confess you have not acquired. "Forgive me till I can forgive," you must pray. "Make me daily so to feel the thousand pounds that thou hast forgiven, that I may freely remit the hundred pence that are due to me. Make me realize where I should have been if thou hadst claimed thy right, so that I may be ashamed to stand for mine." Paul has seized the true Christian principle, "forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Rev. P. T. Forsyth, D.D.

Love Cancels (344).

Love, though scorned and outcast and withstood,
Can without end forgive, and yet have store;
God's love and man's are of the selfsame blood,
And he can see that always at the door
Of foulest hearts, the angel-nature yet
Knocks—to return and cancel all its debt.

—James Russell Lowell.

A Victim of Harsh Judgments. (345)—More than fifty years ago, says a writer in The Common People, a young man lived in a Western city, and, as a druggist, was accumulating property, possessing the respect and confidence of the community, as was proved by the fact that as he was about starting to the East to lay in stock the cashier of a bank handed him a package of money in bills to be handed to a bank officer in Philadelphia. Being obliging, he received the package and promised to deliver it promptly on his arrival, which he did. The cashier of the bank to whom he delivered the bills looked them over hastily, placed them in a drawer, saying is was correct, and went on with his writing.

A month later the Western banker came to the young druggist and informed him that a bill of large denomination was missing. The young man said he did not know how that could be, for he had delivered the package as he had received it, that the Eastern banker had looked over and pronounced it correct, and that he thought his responsibility ended there. The facts stood thus: Two prominent business men in responsible positions on one side and the unsupported 'say-so' of a young druggist on the other. The odds were too unequal, and the young man had to go to the wall. The community withdrew their patronage and their confidence; his business was broken up. He first attempted one thing, then another; but a cloud seemed to hang over him.

Years rolled on. The story was handed down from one to another, and newcomers imbibed the prejudices of the old; and twenty years later there was an odium attached to his character, so that at the mention of his name there was the falling of the countenance which meant "no confidence." The young druggist became an old man, but never succeeded in regaining the social position he had lost. He died in "Coventry." After he was dead and buried, the cashier's old desk was taken to a shop to be

repaired. On removing the drawer, the missing bank bill was found to have been lodged behind it."

The mystery was explained, and probably numbers of this dead man's neighbors who had distrusted and suspected and repelled him for years were ready to say that they never really believed any harm of the poor man. The spirit which is unwilling to forgive a foe, will be ready to cherish suspicion against a friend.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

A Taste of Heaven (346).

"Dr. ——'s son called on me and asked me to go to his father. Found him very thin and ill. Told me he was conscious that his feelings and conduct had not been towards me what they ought to have been for years, and he wished to ask my forgiveness. I told him that whenever there was a quarrel there were sure to be faults on both sides, and that there must be no question as to the more or less, but the forgiveness must be mutual. I kissed his hand, and we wept and prayed together. O God, have mercy on him and me for Jesus' sake! I have had a taste of heaven, where part of our joy will surely consist in our reconciliations."—Diary of Dean Hook.

The Penalty (347).

A lady took offense at her sister in the church for a fancied slight. Her soul was filled with the gall of anger. Her pastor had the assurance from the innocent offender that there had been no thought of a slight, and attempted to calm the storm of passion. Persuasion, entreaty, and admonition had no meaning to the offended lady. To it all she replied, "No, I'll never forgive her." To that final decision her pastor replied. "You need never bow in prayer again, for 'If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your trespasses.'" The danger is that we may be guilty of offering that prayer for forgiveness, while cherishing an unforgiving spirit.—Wishard.

Another Reason (348).

The memory of my own youthful follies caused me on many occasions to forgive what I have seen wrong in the conduct of hundreds of young men in my employment, and give them another chance.—George Moore.

Slow to Judge (349).

Twenty-four hours after a great murder there is difficulty in getting enough men who have not already formulated a judg-

ment to try the case. These men, in most instances, have read and accepted the garbled, highly colored newspaper account; they have to their own satisfaction discovered the murderer, practically tried him and—sentenced him. We hear readers state their decisions with all the force and absoluteness of one who has had the whole Book of Life made luminant and spread out before him. If there be one place in life where the attitude of the agnostic is beautiful, it is in this matter of judging others. It is the courage to say: "I don't know. I am waiting further evidence. I must hear both sides of the question. Till then I suspend all judgment." It is this suspended judgment that is the supreme form of charity.

It is strange that in life we recognize the right of every criminal to have a fair, open trial, yet we condemn unheard the dear friends around us on mere circumstantial evidence. We rely on the mere evidence of our senses, trust it implicitly, and permit it to sweep away like a mighty tide the faith that has been ours for years. We see all life grow dark, hope sink before our eyes, and the golden treasures of memory turn to cruel thoughts of loss to sting us with maddening pain. Our hasty judgment, that a few moments of explanation would remove, has estranged the friend of our life. If we be thus unjust to those we hold dear, what must be the cruel injustice of our judgment of others?—Ian Maclaren.

Coals of Fire (350).

One day, when the horse of a good man in Massachusetts happened to stray into the road, a churlish neighbor put the animal into the public pound. Meeting the owner soon after, he told him what he had done, and added, "If I catch him in the road after this, I'll do just so again." "Neighbor," replied the other, "a night or two ago I looked out of my window, and saw your cattle in my meadow, and I drove them out and shut them in your yard; and if ever I catch them there at any other time, I'll do it again." The man was so struck with the reply that he at once took the horse out of the pound, and paid the charges himself.—Charles Jerdon, in "Gospel Milk and Honey."

Revenge (351).

There are some wrongs which many have been accustomed to regard it as impossible or mean for men to forgive. "Othello," says the author of Ecce Homo, "is certainly not wanting in manly spirit, yet we should despise and almost detest him if he forgave

Iago;" but because we should believe that the forgiveness of some insults did not come from the highest motives.

Again, Professor Dods' instances: "Some of the most thoroughly Christian and wise headmasters have been inclined to wink at fighting among their boys, taking care that it does not become too frequent, nor go any serious length. And even the most forgiving and Christlike of parents is not altogether comfortable if his boy comes home from school and tells him that he was grossly insulted and struck by a boy somewhat bigger than himself, but that instead of defending himself he forgave the offender. Why would most parents be really more gratified to hear that their boy had fought a bigger boy, than that when struck he turned the other cheek? Simply because most parents would have some suspicion that softness and cowardliness had as much to do with turning the other cheek as Christian feeling.... If they had unmistakable proof of their boy's courage and manliness, if they were perfectly sure that fear was a quite unknown feeling to their boy, they would delight in his having forgiven insolence and ill-treatment." Forgiveness in such circumstances can easily be counterfeited; but the real virtue is none the less a duty and privilege. It often takes many times as much courage to forgive as it does to retaliate.—Peloubet.

Thinketh No Evil (352).

"Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" The Master's question suggests what is usually true—that the person with the most faults is the most disposed to find fault. His right to find fault has about the same ground as that of the boy who reproved his sister for "looking round at prayers." With a beam in his own eye he cannot see to remove the splinter from the eye of another. There are several kinds of beams. One that is quite common, is that of envy or prejudice. "A certain lady excelled in making wax flowers and fruits, but was often criticised severely by her friends. She one day showed them an apple, with which they found fault as to the color. When they had finished their criticisms, the lady cut the apple and ate it."—Illustrative Notes.

SERVICE XXIII.

God in Nature.

Psalms 121: 1.

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills."

Lesson:—Job 38.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. God's revelation of himself through the **Bible.**
2. Through **prudential dealings.**
3. Through the **moral virtue.**
4. Through **nature.**
   (1) His wisdom—(Design).
   (2) His power—(Christ stilling storm).
   (3) His love—(Seed time and Harvest, the beautiful in nature, etc.).
5. We should find "sinners in stones." The great botanist, when asked what he saw in the flower at which he was intently gazing, answered, "God." The great astronomer said, "I am thinking God's thoughts after him." Another said, "The undevout astronomer is worst."

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

The Creator. (354)—The graceful form and beauty of nature are but the veil which hides from view the face of the Infinite. The springtime, with its birds of song, the summer with its fragrant flowers, the autumn with its faded leaves, and the winter with its falling snows, are manifestations of the Infinite Spirit. Nature is his mantle, which he has woven in the loom of time. From the waves that play sportively on the seashore to the stars that keep vigil in the sky is his power at work. In the lay of the nightingale, the purple of the violet, the blush of the rose, the beauty of the sunset, the roar of the thunder, the moan of the ocean, the dawning light, and the springing grass is his glory revealed.—Rev. Samuel F. Halfyard.

God and Instinct. (355)—We use the one word "instinct" as explanatory of the continuation of the species of the robin, and are, usually, thus satisfied. But what is instinct? Paley defines it as "a propensity prior to experience and independent of instruction." Thus the word, so far as expressing our knowledge of the process, is only a blanket to cover our ignorance, just as when

we call the tendency of matter to unite with other matter "gravitation" with no understanding whatever of the reason for that tendency.

God, somehow, teaches the robins what to do . No difficulty is too great for God. Infinite power, wisdom and goodness here, as in thousands of other ways, manifest their presence. It becomes us to observe, wonder and adore. "The works of Jehovah are great; sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." We, too, can exclaim with the Psalmist, "O, Jehovah, how manifold are Thy works; in wisdom hast Thou made them all."—Rev. N. I. M. Bogert.

God in the World. (356)—The doctrine of divine immanence, or the presence of God in the universe, is no strange or new theory. This view was held by biblical writers centuries before the Christian era. The Hebrew seer saw manifestations of God in the world, and traced his footprints in all his works. By the Hebrews God was conceived of as the immediate cause of all the scenes and movements of physical phenomena. Both poet and prophet dramatically picture God as present in all the changes of nature.

Pining for Home. (357)—When I lived at Oxford, a good many years ago, one of the tutors lay dying of cancerous disease. It was a summer of perfect warmth and beauty, and every meadow was a haunt of dreams. But the dying man was a native of Iceland, and amid all the glory of those days, the cry on his lips was to get back to Iceland, just that he might see the snow again. That same feeling breathes in the 121st Psalm. 'I to the hills will lift mine eyes.' The writer was an exile, far from home; he was in a land where everything was strange. And what did it matter to him though Babylonia was fairer than the country of his birth? The hills of his homeland were calling him.—Rev. George H. Morrison.

Our World. (358)—The natural world is ours. From its starlit dome to its crudest atom it is all "Our Father's House." We have the range of nearly everything in it. It is true that some people have certain property rights which you and I may not trespass on. But these things which are reserved for individual possession by all the kings and millionaires of the world are trifles compared with what is left us.

Where is God? (359)—I asked the winds, but the air, with all the inhabitants thereof, answered, 'I am not thy God.' I

asked the heavens, the sun, the moon, the stars, and they answered, 'Neither are we the God whom thou seekest.' And I said unto all things that surround me, 'Ye have told me concerning your God that ye are not he, speak to me, then, of him,' and they all cried with a loud voice, 'He made us.'" If the presence of God is seen in the changes and scenes of the world of nature, his wisdom and skill are no less evident in the order and symmetry of the material universe. The regularity and harmony discovered in the objective world, as well as the innumerable marks or signs of purpose found everywhere throughout it, are the work of an intelligent and all-powerful Being. The structure of the physical realm, its arrangement, and adaptions imply the existence of an all-wise and purposive Creator.—"The Spiritual Basis of Man and Nature."

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Hills (360).

The intellect may be as a lowland scene; but the spirit of a man is always highland. We talk sometimes about a smiling landscape; at other times about a landscape of contentment. And you know the kind of scene these words convey, with its quiet beauty and its wealth of rest. The cows are standing knee-deep in the clover, and there is a shimmer of warmth above the grass, and the brook has a murmurous and drowsy sound, and everything breathes the beatitude of peace. It is all tranquil; it is all beautiful; the gentle love of God seems resting on it. Yet tell me, in such a scene as that, do you detect the story of your heart? If you do, either you are a saint, or else the shallowest of living creatures. Most of us live with an unrest within, that such a landscape never can portray. Are there not times when we are on the heights, and the glory of heaven is not far away, and the breath from the infinite is on our faces, and we know the joy of fellowship with God?—Rev. George H. Morrison.

The Beauties of Nature (361).

Those homelier wild flowers which we call weeds; yellow japanned buttercups and star-disked dandelions lying in the grass like sparks that have leaped from the kindling sun of summer; the profuse daisy-like flower which whitens the fields, to the great disgust of liberal shepherds, yet seems fair to loving eyes, with its button-like mound of gold set around with milk-white rays; the tall-stemmed succory, setting its pale blue flowers aflame one after another; the red

and white clovers; the broad, flat leaves of the plantain ("the white man's foot," as the Indians called it)—those common growths which fling themselves to be crushed under our feet and our wheels, making themselves so cheap in this perpetual martyrdom that we forget, each of them is a ray of the divine beauty.—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

A Student of Nature (362).

Agassiz told Whipple: "For myself I may say that I now never make the preparation for penetrating into some small province of Nature hitherto undiscovered without breathing a prayer to the Being who hides his secrets from me only to allure me graciously on to the unfolding of them. I sometimes hear preachers speak of the sad condition of those who are without God in the world; but a scientist who lives without God in the world seems to me worse off than ordinary men."

The Unchanging Stars (363).

The infant stretches out its hand to grasp the Pleiades, but when the child has become an old man, the "seven stars" are still there unchanged, dim only in his sight, and proving themselves the enduring substance, while it is his own life which has gone, as the shine of the glow-worm in the night. They were there just the same a hundred generations ago, before the Pyramids were built, and they will tremble there still when the Pyramids have been worn down to dust with the blowing of the desert sand against their granite sides. They watched the earth grow fit for man, long before man came, and they will doubtless be shining on when our poor human race itself has disappeared from the surface of this planet.—Langley.

God in Nature (364).

"How desolate were Nature, and how void
Of every charm, how like a naked waste
Of Africa, were not a present God
Beheld employing in its various scenes,
When it is viewed unfolding every bud,
Each blossom tingeing, shaping every leaf,
Wafting each cloud that passes o'er the sky,
Rolling each billow, moving every wing
That fans the air, and every warbling throat
Heard in the tuneful woodlands. In the least
As well as in the greatest of his works
Is ever manifest his presence kind."

SERVICE XXIV.

Penitence and Pardon.

Luke 23:42, 43.

"And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom, and Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

Lesson:—Psalms 51.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Penitence,** is the sinner looking to the Saviour in humble confession and appeal.

2. **Pardon,** is the gracious Saviour, looking in pity upon the sinner and lovingly responding to that appeal.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Sorry Enough to Stop. (366)—But the essential element of repentance ethically considered, is the turning right about face, the breaking off from sin. This is, in reality, the human side or element of conversion. It is not enough to weep and make confession: We must stop sinning. Sin is the thing that stands in the way of salvation, while it is everything also that makes salvation necessary. Therefore ceasing to sin is necessarily a condition of salvation.—Spreng.

God's Voice. (367)—The voice of law is the voice of God. The hand that carved the decalogue on tables of stone writes on our heart the moral law—its precepts and its sanctions. The face that shone in the lurid fires of Sinai flashes into our spirits the agonizing sense of the wrath of the Lamb. When Abraham saw that countenance of pure light, he confessed, "I am but dust and ashes." Job recognized God amid the blaze of the lightning flash, and exclaimed, "Now, I abhor myself." Isaiah beheld in the temple of vision the heavenly King, and cried, "Woe is me, for I am undone." When Daniel saw the Lord, his "comeliness was turned into corruption." When John looked at the glorified Man of Sorrows, he "fell at His feet as dead."—"Life in His Name."

Religion Necessary. (368)—A plant may manage to live in a cellar, but its life will be very different if you bring it out to the open sky and sunshine. Life out of Christ is life in a cellar; it is only in him you learn what liberty is, only in him

do you find light, life, and scope. Religion is not an accomplishment, which you may be somewhat the better of but can get along without; it is not a refuge you may be compelled to resort to, as a man may be driven to enter a hospital, but it is an essential of life. You cannot become a normal human being without it. A man who is born deaf, dumb and blind, and with a very imperfect brain, may live in a kind of way, and you may by courtesy call him a man; but you know how much he loses, even though he himself, from his diseased condition, may look upon speech as a mere superfluity, and may have a kind of contentment to be as he is, never having known anything better. So the man who is not a Christian, and has no connection with those things with which Christianity brings men into connection, is a man only in a very imperfect sense, and is by no means like the person he may in Christ become. The great reason why you should become a Christian is simply this, that only thereby can you become a man.—Marcus Dods.

Hope for All. (369)—But the truth which engrosses all our hearts, as we read this amazing story is that there is hope for the worst of sinners. Here is the most unlikely man, under the most unlikely circumstances, saved by the grace of God in Christ. After a youth of waywardness, and a manhood of crime, he is seized and held when on the very edge of his doom.

What a message that fact is to any wasted life here to-night! What a hope is born in a man when he realizes that grace has such possibilities! I know that there are men anad women who look on the faces of young innocence and feel a sharpened remorse. They have shut the door which leads to peace behind them long ago. I know that there are men and women who listen to the promise of forgiveness and cleansing, of natures renewed, and of wills made strong for God, with a dumb denial within. To-night I preach Jesus, and I preach Jesus crucified for you. I beseech you to look at him. Look at him until God and his holiness become clear, until conscience speaks with an imperativeness and a demand you have never yet known. Look at him as one who knows the worst about you, and died to reconcile you to God, and fling yourself just as you sit, upon his mercy.—W. M. Clough, D.D.

Calvin's Hope. (370)—I testify and profess that I humbly seek from God that he may so will me to be washed and purified by the great Redeemer's blood, shed for the sins of the whole

human race, that it may be permitted me to stand before his tribunal, under the ...er of the Redeemer himself.—Calvin.

Today (371).

Ere yet thy heart be hard and dry,
Make haste to pardon and atone;
One hoarded hate shuts all the sky,
And turns the Father's heart to stone.

—Frederick Langbridge.

Willing to Forgive. (372)—Forgiveness has been defined as "the permanent state of God's mind and heart in grace toward sinful man." That definition has been of great help to me when I have been deeply discouraged, and cast down because of my sins. Forgiveness is the permanent state of God's mind and heart toward me, in grace, therefore I may come to him again in penitence, claiming his gracious forgiveness. I pass this definition on to you, and commend it to your constant memory.—Pentecost.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Daily Cleansing (373).

In describing the different habits of the people of two adjacent provinces the Chinese say, 'A Hupeh man does not sleep unless he has first cleansed his feet; but a Honan man only washes his feet on the day when he fords a river.' Let us purify ourselves by daily faith, and not wait for the outstanding events of life, the passage over Jordan, before setting about the task. Never let us be afraid of coming back to the Master at eventide, for he knows the risks and privations of the way; and when the last solemn twilight deepens, washed from the mischances of our pilgrim days, we shall enter through the gates into the sinless city, and sit down with the saints in the Father's kingdom.—Selby.

Forgiven (374).

In a Scottish village lived a doctor noted for his skill and piety. After his death, when his books were examined, several accounts had written across them in red ink: "Forgiven—too poor to pay." His wife, who was of a different disposition, said: "These accounts must be paid." She therefore sued for the money. The judge said: "Is this your husband's handwriting in red?" She replied that it was. "Then," said the judge, "there is not a tribunal in the land that can obtain the money where he has written 'Forgiven.'" So when Christ says "Thy sins are for-

given," we are released from our spiritual debts.—The Sunday School Chronicle.

The Two Selves (375).

You need saving from your bad self, but the most subtile is your good self. O God, slay us utterly. There will be no peace of God, no rest of God in the soul until sin is put away. It is religious cant and humbug to talk about rest when you know sin has not been driven out of the soul. It will never be ours until sin is put beneath the feet forever, or nailed to His cross. Then we may expect rest, not until then.—Sel.

Repentance (376).

Regrets are a waste of time in every possible instance except one. That one is the instance in which the soul entertains them thoughtfully and humbly until they become valuable lessons for the future. Then they are no waste, but a true personal gain for the coming years.

Trifling with Sin (377).

To namby-pamby penitence, to sugar coated theology, to sentimental religion, Christ's death for sin is an over strained and exaggerated conception. There is to such speculation and sentiment no sin to die for. There are errors, unfortunate circumstances, temptations, and other more or less disagreeable things, but no proper sin, no wrong act or sinful state, for which a man may be held to full responsibility. But turn from all such trifling to Judas and Lady Macbeth.

A Seeking Saviour (378).

Well, if as a sinner, a convicted and helpless sinner, you are a docile, earnest and sincere seeker, you will find Christ as your Lord and Saviour, for he is seeking you. He came from heaven for the express purpose of seeking and saving the lost—of whom you are one. And the very fact that you now realize your condemnation as a sinner and are moved to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner" is a token from God that the merciful and compassionate Redeemer is finding you. For know assuredly that God does not delight in the death of the sinner. On the contrary his love for lost men is such that he "gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life."—Campbell.

SERVICE XXV.

Precious Promises.

2 Peter 1:4.

"Exceeding great and precious promises."

Lesson:—Psalms 91.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **The Bible a mine of precious promises.**
2. **Faith appropriates** them.
3. These promises appropriated by faith **build up the spiritual life.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Promises. (381)—The Bible is full of promises, which in many cases are evidently unfulfilled; not because of any failure on God's part, but because we will not turn the golden key of Faith in the wards of Promise. Christ himself, however, willing, cannot do mighty works where there is unbelief. It is not even enough to pray for God's keeping power; we must claim it. I was much helped the other day by a young man saying, "I used to pray to God to keep me, and I was not kept; I now claim his keeping each morning, and thank him for it, and I have learned the secret of victory."

Trust in Him. (382)—"In quietness and confidence shall be your strength," is the verse that has come to me with wonderful sweetness this morning. It tells me that I must put my whole trust for salvation and for service in the absolutely free, full and wholly unmerited mercy of God. Although I have long professed to know this to be so, still I find myself, even yet, thinking now and then of this or that thing which I must do in order to make sure of my acceptance with God. Of course, the more of good work we do, the better, provided it does not imply a lurking fear that God would be somewhat less willing to forgive and save us, but for the self-denials we practice, or by the good works which we do. Of the two, he is better pleased, as I believe, with a calm, quiet, effortless and childlike "confidence" in his overflowing self-moved compassion and love for us, than with any amount of religious activity which may be thought necessary to secure our salvation. For myself, at any rate, "Be still and know that I am God" is about the hardest lesson for me

to learn. I hope to learn it, now that I am strong and well, and without waiting to be laid upon a sick bed, where quietly trusting, would be all that I could possibly do.—Christian Intelligencer.

As Children. (383)—What a vast portion of our lives is spent in anxious and useless foreboding concerning the future, either our own or that of our dear ones! Present joys, present blessings, slip by and we miss half of their sweet flavor, and all for want of faith in him who provides for the tiniest insect in the sunbeam. O, when shall we learn the sweet trust in God our little children teach us every day by their confiding faith in us? We who are so mutable, so faulty, so irritable, so unjust; and he who is so watchful, so pitiful, so loving, so forgiving! Why can not we, slipping our hand into his each day, walk trustingly over that day's appointed path, thorny or flowery, crooked or straight, knowing that evening will bring us sleep, peace and home?—Phillips Brooks.

Work for the Kingdom. (384)—Do your work, but do it in quietness and confidence. Do your duty, but do it without this corroding anxiety; and He, who even in the desert, spreads His tables for the birds, He who clothes the flowers in their embroideries of beauty, will feed and clothe you.

If you seek first the Kingdom of God, all these other things, or things transcendently better than these, shall be added unto you. You thank God for the harvest, thank Him for more—for your redemption, for your immortality, for Him who is the Bread of Life, "He who cometh to me shall never hunger and he who believeth in me shall never thirst."

Self-renunciation. (385)—Would you realize God's keeping grace? Give yourself entirely up to him, renouncing all trust in yourself, and all connections with evil. Choose definitely and for ever the lot of the cross of Jesus. And then trust Jesus to keep you. Whenever temptation approaches, look up, and say, "Jesus, I trust thy keeping power." Ask the Holy Spirit to keep you so constantly in this attitude that it may become the habit of your soul to look to Jesus when temptation assails. Trust him to keep you trusting. Nourish your faith by devout meditation on the promises of God. Do not look at your weakness or your foes, but at the mighty bulwarks of God's salvation, which he has appointed. "The Lord is thy Keeper." Hear his gracious words, and hide them in your heart; "I the Lord do

keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." Surely it were the height of blasphemy to affirm that the Almighty is not able, or willing to keep the soul that trusts him. Only man would shake the fugitive dove out of his bosom to the hawk!—F. B. Meyer.

Worry Disheartens. (386)—Write on your daybook, on your ledger, on your money safe, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Do not worry about notes that are far from due. Do not pile up on your counting desk the financial anxieties of the next twenty years. Melancholy is the owl that is perched in many a Christian soul. The good times, if we will but believe it, are now; the better times are not backward—but beyond. We believe, as in the past, so in the future, the world will grow better and better. By and by the world and all that is therein shall pass away, but in the new heavens and the earth righteousness, only righteousness, shall dwell; and cheerfulness and growth will ever mark the progress of the soul.—Talmage.

Prison Doors. (387)—Let the prisoner but surely learn that the outer door of his prison shall one day be opened, and he will never again rest comfortably in his cell. He will dream of liberty, he will picture himself a free man, and he will sometimes feel in the chill gloom the warmth as of the morning light of a summer day. So it is with the unsaved soul. The very sight of the door makes him dissatisfied with a life of sin; he shall escape—he must escape—one day, and he feels in his better moments the touch of the hand of Jesus.

Beyond the door, what prospects lie! This is Achor, the valley of trouble, dark with shadows, desolate with dead winds; but, beyond who can tell what fair landscapes lie bathed in sunshine? Pardon, peace, victory, life lived in faith and love, the growing likeness of the soul to God—all that beyond the opening of the door! Greater than the powers of punishment is the might of hope, and so God has tempered judgment with mercy.—Home Messenger.

All things for Good. (388)—He makes no promise that to those whom he loves only pleasant things shall come. But he does promise that to those that are brought into harmony with him by the power of love, all things whether pleasant or painful shall work together for good. At the first cry of pain from his child he does not stretch forth his hand to remove the thorn from the flesh, but he does give grace sufficient to enable one to bear

it. He may seldom make our burden one straw s weight lighter, but he does give us strength to stand upright beneath its load.—John W. Findlay.

Faith in Rights. (389)—He who believes in eternal justice can not be beaten in life. He may be stung; he may be half dead with the wounds of life, stricken of heart in the lonely desert, but he is sure to start into energy the moment he sees the fresh sunlight or the breezes of the new impulse, such impulse as God sends a man who clings to him by faith.—Stopford A. Brooke.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

God's Promise Sure (390).

Not long since I asked a mother who had been left a widow when her three boys were small, how she managed to raise such fine sons without a father to help her. She replied:

"My husband died when Alex was ten years old and Tom three. Just before his death, through the breaking of a bank, we had lost all we had saved, and now I must support the family by teaching, although in very frail health. I am ashamed to say that, while I had carefully taught my boys the scripture from their very babyhood, I had never prayed aloud with them. I left this for their father to do at family worship. I just felt that I would never summon courage to pray aloud. Nevertheless, the night after the dear one was laid to rest, I called the boys around me and said: 'Now, Alex, you are the oldest and must be the head of the family, now that papa is gone. You will have to conduct the family worship.

"He said, 'But, mmmma, I do not know how to pray aloud.'

"I said, 'Neither do I; but you can read a chapter, and then I will pray the best I can. Tom and George will each make a petition, and then you can close with the Lord's Prayer, and any petition you can think of.' This program was carried out, and soon we were able to pray without embarrassment. And such a comfort this precious hour of prayer was to us. At a certain hour every evening we gathered for it, and no matter how much company or what excitement might be on hand, nothing was allowed to interfere.

"The boys were required to read the Bible for themselves daily as soon as they could read well in the Second Reader, and the habit went with them when they went to college. I prayed a great deal for them and wrote them earnest letters. Now two

of my boys are ministers, and one an officer in the church at the age of twenty-three.

"My success was not due to myself, for I was frail and had to work very hard. I was conscious of my insufficiency and just trusted to a covenant-keeping God to bless even by mistakes, and then did my very best."

I meditated on what this mother told me, and wondered whether it was selfishness or ignorance that led so many Christian mothers to neglect that which makes for the temporal and eternal peace of their children. Teach them daily the scripture, and to really pray, and this alone will do much to neutralize the power of the temper. David says, "Thy word have I had in my heart, that I might not sin against thee."—Christian Observer.

I Can Trust Him (391).

I may be sure of the right road, sure I am on it, and yet be in doubt whether I shall reach the goal. Unto such I commend the words of an old darky whom I once met. I asked him how long he had been serving the Lord. "Fifty years," he replied. "Well, uncle," I said, "after keeping the faith so long, you must feel pretty confident of holding out to the end?" "Ah, Massa," he replied, "it's only a question of whether de Lord can hold on, and I reckon I can trust him."—P. S. Henson, D.D.

The Father's Face (392).

I was awakened the other morning, about four o'clock, in my room, by a little voice just beside my bed, in the dark, asking for a drink. I got the little lad a drink, and he lay quiet a moment, and then he said, "Father, may I sing myself to sleep?" And I said, "Yes, dear; go ahead." But he soon got up so much enthusiasm that I told him he would better stop, or none of the rest of us could sleep. Then he was quiet awhile, but soon I heard his little voice again, in the perfect stillness of the night. "Father, have you got your face turned toward me?" And I said, "Yes, little boy," and the darkness was as the light of day to him.—Selected.

My Father (393).

"Long ago," says Prebendary Webb-Peploe, "when I was twenty-two years of age, I went to see the great minister at York. After walking through it, I sat down, and did not observe a man sitting on my left side. I said aloud, without knowing anyone was near me, 'What a magnificent place! How wonderful!' Suddenly a voice said, 'Yes, it is wonderful.' I looked around

and saw a poor old man, with a stick in his hand, and he looked white, and, apparently, was starving. I was not generous or rich, but I took out 1s. 6d. and said to him, 'My brother, would you allow me to help you to a dinner, as I think you must be needing one?' Then I arose to leave. The old man said, 'Stop, stop! You do not know what you have done; you have saved my life today.' I answered, 'Is that so? Tell me how,' 'Well, I was called last night by a messenger to go to my dying daughter, eight miles on the other side of the town. I walked into the town, and when I got here I could not go on further, as I felt so weak. I had only sufficient money to get a clean bed for the night. I came in this morning to my Father's house, knowing He would give me what was wanted.'"—London Sunday School Chronicle.

Holding the Father's Hand (394).

A lad in a London hospital had to undergo a surgical operation. Just before the chloroform was administered, his father said, "Do you think you can bear it, my son?" The boy answered, "Yes, father, if you will hold my hand." When we are asked to undergo the surgery of pain, an unseen Father is near at hand. He says, "My child, do you think you can drink of the cup?" And the child, in that greatness of soul which is divine, answers back, "Oh, my Father, I can drink of the cup if you will hold my hand!" That is the transfiguration of sorrow.

Promises Comfort Powders (395).

Jehovah said of old, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people. . . . . Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem." "Be of good comfort" was often on the lips of the Saviour. One of God's sweetest names is the "Comforter," "he that comforteth you." It is fully in place, then, that we look sometimes at the more pleasing, encouraging aspects of our religion. We need to be soothed as well as stimulated. The writer saw in a hospital not long since, on a stand beside an invalid, an envelope labeled "Comfort powders for the weak and weary; take one as often as needed." There had been placed in it by some friendly hand a lot of little papers, folded to imitate powder receptacles, and on each paper was written some sentence well fitted to console. —The Riches of His Grace.

SERVICE XXVI.

National Righteousness.

(Independence Day).

Psalms 33: 12.

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."

Lesson:—Psalms 33.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **God deals with nations** as well as with individuals.
2. **The same laws** hold good in both spheres:
   (1) **National righteousness** wins God's blessing and the truest prosperity.
   (2) **National wrongdoing** brings down disaster.
3. **The blessed nation** is not necessarily the one with the strongest armies, shrewdest diplomats, etc., but the one **"whose God is the Lord."**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Making People Free. (397)—It is said that the Fourth of July is a day of happy augury for mankind. This is true because on that day America entered on a course and proclaimed principles of government which have been of profound significance for mankind. Many nations have had a career of conquest and of civilizing dominion: but to make an immense people prosperous, happy, and free is a nobler and grander achievement than the most brilliant conquests and the widest dominion.—James Bryce.

What Makes a Nation. (398)—I. Our Country—Our lots have been cast in the most favorable land, all things considered, on earth. We have within our domains the finest scenery, the most fertile soil, the most diversified and salubrious climate that God has vouchsafed to man; yea, such a heritage as the sun nowhere else shines upon.

II. Our Government.—It is corrupt, sometimes, in its administration, but in theory it is just and right, because it is founded on the principles of liberty and equality and guarantees the rights of all. Such a system is unknown where the truths of the Gospel have not been proclaimed.

III. Our Educational Institutions.—They are the glory of

our land—our common schools, our select schools, academies, seminaries, colleges, and universities for the intellectual training and elevation of the rising generation; and their like can be found in no land unilluminated by the light reflected from the cross of Christ in the blessed Gospel.

IV. Our Social Institutions.—The family circle—the tender father, the loving mother, the happy children, all dwelling together in peace and unity, purity and plenty, is a picture utterly unknown in heathen climes. There the dwelling, of the poorer class especially, is a tent or hovel. The father is a tyrant, the mother a slave or "beast of burden," and the children are regarded as incumbrances instead of blessings.

V. Our Churches.—These are the centers of our social as well as our religious life. The blessings they are to us may better be appreciated by imagining them all dissolved, and the beautiful edifices they have erected turned into temples for the worship of idols, with all the revolting and demoralizing rites and ceremonies that usually accompany such worship.

VI. Our Sunday-schools.—Our Sunday-schools, into which are gathered the little children, to be taught the principles of truth and virtue; to be taught obedience to parents and teachers and all in lawful authority; to have instilled into their minds a love for God and parents, for friends, neighbors and associates, and even for enemies. These blessed institutions are the fruits of Christianity, fruits that never take root in heathen soil.

Harmony. (399)—As Bancroft well says: "The country was an instrument with thirteen strings, and the only man who could bring out all their harmonious thought was Washington." He struck them all with matchless skill and resistless power. While others desponded, he never once lost heart; while others held back, he pressed forward, while others spoke hesitatingly, doubtingly, fearfully, he hesitated not, doubted not, feared not; but, with sublime courage, poured into the ear of the agitated nation such fateful and mighty words as these: "There is no alternative between the adoption of the Constitution and Anarchy. The Constitution or disunion is before us." And, thanks be to God, the nation heard and heeded the words of its Father.

Our Heritage. (400)—Let us beware then, how we recklessly water our blue-blood. Webster said at Bunker Hill, just as the vast immigration was beginning, "We are placed at the head of representative and popular governments." We shall be recreant

to the duty of that headship if we permit the fundamental conditions of national repose, of the security of personal rights, of good laws, and of just administration to be imperilled by the ignorant, lawless, idle, and dangerous overflow of all other countries. We are the occupants and guardians of this country, and with a kindly heart and hospitable hand toward all the world, we must prescribe the conditions upon which the world shall come here. If America is to remain the head of free governments and the hope of liberty in the world, our first duty is to remember that constitutional liberty has its own laws and conditions, and that only by respecting and enforcing them can liberty for ourselves and for all men be preserved.—G. W. Curtis.

Symbols of Hope. (401)—"I was struck by two things everywhere that I traveled abroad. One was that the name 'America' stood as a golden symbol of hope for all who felt that they were downtrodden. On the other hand I found everywhere a certain disheartened sense that we had not come up to our ideals as there was ground for believing that we ought to have come; that we have achieved them as we ought to have achieved them; and every instance of corruption, of demagogy, of the unjust abuse of wealth to the detriment of the public or the improper acceptance by the public that mere wealth in and of itself constituted a claim to regard in the community; every instance of brutal materialism, every time that it was made evident that the attitude of this country was such as ought not to be the attitude of a democracy founded upon the principles on which ours was founded—every such instance served to dim the ideal that the name America conjured up in the minds of those in foreign lands. Now, you men of America, if you will not see that your house is put in order for your own sakes, I suppose it would be useless to ask you to put it in order for the sake of other men. And yet I can not imagine a more stirring appeal being made to any people than this well-nigh voiceless appeal from those who in other lands have not had the treatment to which they are in justice entitled, who appeal to us to manage our Republic according to the highest standards of morality and decency, so that they can keep unshaken their faith in a realizable ideal."

The Declaration of Independence. (402)—Finally a committee of five were chosen to draft a manifesto, and the chairman, Thomas Jefferson, drew up the declaration which was presented

to Congress on July 2. For three days the debate ran high, and the fate of the future nation hung trembling in the balance. The news of the arrival of a large British armament, under the brothers Admiral and Sir William Howe, in New York harbor stimulated the enthusiasm of the patriots. "Now or never!" they cried. The lukewarm and the timid were forced into the tide, and the great declaration was adopted and signed by the President of Congress, John Hancock, whose bold signature still stands out on the time-worn parchment, Thursday, July 4, 1776.

Christ Makes Men Free. (401)—"I am glad to speak of Christ, my Master, thus," said Phillips Brooks, "because so often in Christendom it has seemed as if Christ were the enslaver of mankind, as if he went among men as he went through the temple, with a lash, rebuking men simply for their iniquities; as if he were continually uttering the great 'Thou shalt not' of prohibition, telling men what they must not do, and rebuking them for their wrong acts. This is but the subordinate message of him who comes to us with the Gospel of Christianity. His great message is that of freedom and of a larger life; and every breaking away of any one from slavery is but the preliminary to the opening of some larger chamber of the human life."

Surface Prosperity. (404)—There are some evil nations who seem to prosper. They stretch out their branches like a green bay tree. In many ways the real evil is disguised from its victims; prosperity smiles upon them, the world gives them its applause. Because judgment is not speedily executed, men set themselves to do evil. Success blinds men to the fact that they are slaves to sin. Yet the time always comes when they awake to a realization of their terrible bondage.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Our Flag the Symbol of Freedom (405).

One of the finest stories of our flag that I know was told a few months ago by Mr. George Kennan, in the midst of a series of articles in the Outlook upon conditions in Russia. He says that in the summer of 1876, when we were celebrating our centennial, there were over 3,000 prisoners in a Russian detention prison who determined, by means of their knock signal, to have a general prison celebration of the Fourth of July. They began a month beforehand by asking all their visiting relatives to bring or send to the prison as many red and blue handkerchiefs, flannel

drawers, etc., as they could, without exciting suspicion. They also began to buy and hoard cheap tallow candles. These pieces of colored cloth were distributed secretly through the prison by swinging them from window to window and in other ways. Then all the women who were permitted to have needles and thread began to make rude and tiny American flags. Before the first of July almost every prisoner had one small American emblem. Long before early daybreak on the great centennial day these hundreds of patriotic emblems of liberty began to flutter from every window of the great fortress, while inside the prisoners could be heard faintly singing patriotic melodies or cheering hoarsely for liberty. Of course the guards, who probably had no idea what it was all about, soon confiscated the flags and silenced the turmoil, but all through the day new tatters of red, white and blue were furtively hung out to the sunshine. And when night came the glowworm glimmer of the thousand candles shone faintly from the windows across the prison quadrangle.

Mr. Kennan concludes this tear-compelling incident by saying that many of these wretched men and women had Siberia and death before them. "But in their solitude, their loneliness and their misery, they did not forget the American centennial Fourth of July. And the spirit by which they were animated transfigured their pitiful celebration, with its tricolored rags and its paltry bits of candle, and made it infinitely more significant, in the world's history, than all the pomp and ceremony that attend the coronation of a czar."—William Byron Forbush in The Congregationalist.

The Bondage of Sin (406).

A few years ago ex-Comptroller Wemple, of the State of New York, was one of the most promising of the politicians of that State. To-day he is morally, intellectually, and physically, a wreck. He considered it necessary to his political success to follow the custom of treating prospective voters at the bar. Before he was aware of its power he himself was helplessly in the clutches of the drink habit. His mighty struggles to escape were unavailing. He lost all power over himself. Not long ago he was detected attempting to commit the crime of arson; the court mercifully decided that the act was due to the weakened condition of his mind. Last month he was taken to the asylum for the insane at Utica. Admission was refused for the reason that when presented he was in a condition of shameful intoxi-

cation. What a picture of the helpless degredation to which sin brings its victims! In body, mind, and soul, a hopeless slave.—The Illustrator.

The God of Battles (407).

The battle biggest in results of any battle ever fought on the continent was that comparatively little one between the English and the French on the Heights of Abraham near Quebec, on September 13, 1759. France, before that battle, held the whole interior of the continent, from Quebec down to the mouth of the Mississippi. The English colonists were scattered along the Atlantic seaboard in straggling fashion. The heart of the whole continent was in the grip of France. But France stood for absolutism both in state and church. England stood for at least the beginning of freedom both in state and church; for the rights of men; for a free Bible; for Protestantism as against the tyranny of Rome. That battle rescued the continent from absolutism, and made possible, in this new world, the development of a nation the underlying principle of which should be the right of a man to himself, liberty of conscience, deliverance from the mandate of a king whose simple word was law, and from a priestly hierarchy substituting for the Bible an apostate church. He who studies that battle, both in itself and its vast results, cannot fail to see the benignant hand of God.—Wayland Hoyt, D.D.

Warfare Over (408).

At the close of the war of 1866, the triumphant army of Prussia came to Berlin for a reception of welcome. As each regiment approached the city gate from the Thiergarten, it was halted by a choir demanding by what right it would enter the city. The regiment replied in a song, reciting the battles it had fought, the victories it had won; then came a voice from the choir: "Enter into the city." And so on the next came up reciting its deeds, and another, and another, each challenged and welcomed. They marched up the Linden between the rows of captured cannon, with the banners they had borne and the banners they had taken, and they saluted the statue of grand old Frederick, the creator of Prussia. So when all the fierce warfare of earth shall have been accomplished, and the kingdom of Christ assured, the phalanxes of his Church shall go the city with songs and tokens of victory. They shall march in together, singing hallelujahs and shall lay their trophies at the feet of him

upon whose head are many crowns, King of kings and Lord of lords.—Thompson.

Lincoln's Prayer (409).

James F. Rusling heard General Sickles ask Lincoln regarding the state of feeling in Washington, while the battle of Gettysburg was in progress, and how Lincoln related he had prayed to God for help. He promised to submit to God's will and to serve him for the balance of his life, if he granted the Union army success. And he told how a sweet comfort crept into his soul with the assurance that the Almighty had taken the whole thing into his own hands. It was after this he made the important confession: "I should be the most presumptuous blockhead upon this footstool if I for one day thought that I could discharge the duties which have come upon me since I came into this place without the aid and enlightenment of One who is stronger and wiser than all others."

A Great Truth (410).

"It is the moral condition and standard of a country which is the test of its real prosperity and civilization."

True Patriotism (411).

As Lincoln stood on the field of Gettysburg and saw the piles of dead, he asked: "Why were all these men so willing to die?" And the answer came, as Dr. Lemmon says, "Christ, a self-giving Saviour and his love compelled the devotion of men to the right as God gave them to see the right." While this mood was upon him he uttered the famous Gettysburg address.—Medd.

The Flag Ennobling Martyrdom (412)

In August, 1863, I was going from West Virginia to Philadelphia. At Pittsburgh, when the train rolled into the station, a great, silent crowd waited for it. A splendid funeral-car stood in the background surrounded by troops, and the street was filled by a long line of closed carriages. A volunteer officer in the Union army, who had been a man of influence and high position in Pittsburgh, had been killed in the last battle, and now his native city mourned for him and did him honor. The coffin, rich in decorations and covered with flowers, was reverently borne from the car. The troops presented arms; the standards, draped with black, were lowered, and the air was filled with the solemn music of funeral marches. After a short delay, the train rolled on its way. Late that afternoon it stopped at a little

station among the Allegheny Mountains. The station-house was but a rough shed; a pig was rooting under the platform. In the background was a squalid cabin in a potato-patch. The whole landscape spoke of barrenness and helpless poverty.

Standing on the platform was a woman, a poor country girl. She wore an old, patched gown that clung limply to her thin body, and a calico sunbonnet which she had thrown back that she might better watch the train. A little barefooted boy clung to her, but she did not heed him. Her face was pinched and bloodless. She leaned forward, staring with childish, dilated eyes into each car as it passed. There was a grating sound as the trainmen dragged a rough pine box from the freight-car and laid it on the platform. The woman went up to it, and without a word or a tear dropped down and clasped her arms about it. There was not a man on the train who did not uncover his head, but she saw nothing of the many strange, pitying eyes fixed on her. Her boy came to her, crying, "Where is papa? You said he would come!" She did not hear or answer; only clasped the box closer. The tragedy was so squalid, so hopeless, that the onlookers saw only its cruelty. Why should this poor farm-boy be struck down, and this helpless wife and her child be left to struggle and to suffer? Why need there be this waste of human life? Just then a man ran out of the station, carrying a tattered old flag, and spread it proudly over the box. And at the touch of it, it seemed to us who watched, as if our country laid her hand on the poor coffin and said: "This is my son. He died for me. Pay reverence to him."

The train steamed slowly away. The setting sun threw its low light over the lonely group on the platform—the woman and her child and her dead—but the flag ennobled this poor martyrdom. Never in the triumphs of peace nor fury of battle did it express with more emphasis the majesty of our Country than when it claimed the poor volunteer as its son, one of its heroes to be honored for all time.—The Youth's Companion.

SERVICE XXVII.

The Christian Use of Money

Proverbs 2:9, 10.

"Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst with new wine."

Lesson:—Prov. 11:24; Isa. 58:10, 11; Mal. 3:10, 11; 2 Cor. 9:7.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. A command, "Honor, etc." Stewardship.
2. A privilege, "Honor the Lord with, etc." Consecrated on earth.
3. A promise conditional upon compliance, "So shall a." Fidelity brings not only spiritual but also temporal rewards.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Partnership with Christ. (413)—Money well invested grows. Even a very small capital for a beginning may make one rich if it is well invested. If Christ is the head of the firm, the business will succeed. It is safe to invest with God. He did not so make the world as to shut himself out of it. He made earth's soil for heaven's flowers. They will certainly grow. There are weeds enough. They are sown broadcast. An enemy hath done this. But no enemy can ever make the soil of this world unfit for heaven's flowers and God's grain. Blessed are they that sow beside all waters.

Riches in Heaven. (414)—Riches gained and used for God bring blessings to a suffering world. So used, they are laid up in heaven, the only safe place for our treasures. It is not necessarily a sin to be rich in this world's goods, if wealth has been honestly gained and is wisely appropriated. The cause of truth and righteousness is moving forward today because some of God's servants know the noble use of money. They have heard God's message to men: "Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant that he swore unto thy fathers."—S. E. Wishard, D.D.

Cheerful Giving. (415)—If we do not give to the Lord out of love to God, we never can give with a true

spirit. Christian beneficence means well-doing. It is benevolence put into exercise. It is equivalent to the Pauline term charity, understood in the Pauline sense, and not in the modern sense. Charity now means a gift or donation bestowed out of pity upon some one whom we call "an object of charity." But this is not Paul's idea of charity at all. Neither is it the meaning of Christian beneficence. If so, why call it Christian? Why not call it natural, or human? Our human nature demands of us to be considerate of the poor and to relieve the suffering. And when a person shuts up his "bowels of compassion" upon the suffering, we call him inhuman. Christian beneficence, or giving, however, is expressive of a higher act than the relief of suffering. And the difference is just this: In the modern sense of charity you give because you pity. In the Scriptural sense you give because you love. This is the distinction between charity as used by Paul and charity as we use it. The one is pity, the other is love. We give to a beggar, or an unfortunate person, because we pity him; we give to a friend because we love him.

Well, now, in giving to God for the purpose of carrying on his work, or for enlarging it, would you give out of pity, or out of love? Would you give to any of the causes connected with Christian work with the same feeling that you would toss a bone to a stray dog, or that you would have in giving an old coat to a beggar? Or would you give to God as you would to a dear friend, feeling that it is a favor for you to give; and feeling that your gift is only too mean and small to express your friendship? This is precisely the Scriptural idea of giving.

Motive in Giving. (416)—Giving is part of the service of the Master. The giving of time, effort and money are included in every Christian's obligation, John H. Converse, President of The Baldwin Locomotive Works, said in The Delineator. The proper and best methods of giving are those for the benefit of our fellow creatures, and should be accompanied, as far as possible, by personal interest and sympathy. The objects are numberless, but the motive should be the good of others and not the glorification of self.

Brought Gifts. (417)—I take it from the history of people who, whatever may have been their subsequent sins, were once a pattern of liberality, worthy of the imitation of Christians. The occasion was this: The Lord commanded the construction

of a tabernacle out of the most precious materials to be found in the possession of his people, the Jews. Moses gathered the congregation and made this simple announcement: "This is the thing which the Lord commanded; take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord; whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the Lord; gold and silver and brass," etc. He did not add a strong appeal and hurry them into an exercise of liberality. He gave them time for consideration. After the notice was given, he dismissed the congregation, and they "departed from the presence of Moses." No further agency was employed—no repetition of the announcement; no collectors passed from tent to tent; no reminding them of the duty, for though there was a commandment, yet every one was free in his donations; "Whosoever is of a willing heart let him bring it." Indeed, Moses seemed to have been restrained by the Lord's instructions from receiving any but free-will offerings: "Of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye shall take my offering" (Ex. 15:2). Note how strangely all this contrasts with the machinery necessary in this day to get a little money out of the pockets of so many so-called Christians.

And now, behold the results: "And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, and brought bracelets and earrings, and tablets, all jewels of gold" (Ex. 35:22). Not content with one contribution, they repeated it again and again—"and they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning." Nowadays there are many who regard themselves excused from giving until called on.—Nevin's Practical Thoughts.

Jesus Begging! (418)—Our gifts to God must therefore denote our esteem and love for him. And when we give for the support of the Church at home, and for its extension into the heathen lands, and for any of its departments of work, or for the support of its poor, with such feelings of love we shall enjoy giving and be blessed in it. We shall not then look upon giving as a hardship, as many do now; nor shall we speak of the Church as "begging," or of the ministers as preaching begging sermons when funds are solicited for the grand enterprise of the Gospel. The Gospel begging! Jesus Christ begging! It is a shame to have such a thought. The Gospel was founded in self-sacrifice. Its originators held their lives not dear, but laid them down for the world's salvation. Were the whole realm of nature ours,

that were a present far too small with which to compensate divine love for the gift of Jesus Christ. And shall we give grudgingly; shall we feel annoyed at the frequent calls for beneficence? No. Rather ought we to rejoice for the privilege of co-working with our Lord. We ought to rejoice at the open doors of usefulness before us; we ought to rejoice in the large fields we may sow. The Lord loves a cheerful giver. And a cheerful giver is one who gives from love.—L. E. R.

Rich and Poor. (419)—Wealth and poverty are relative terms. We are rich when we have enough for our real wants. We think that we are poor when we cannot get all that we would like to have, or when a neighbor has more, and lives better than ourselves. We must ignore this artificial standard. We must come down to the divine idea that life is more than meat and raiment—that it consisteth not in material good, but in the opportunity and ability to do good. Our age is an age of opportunity. Objects of true benevolence are standing all around us with outstretched hands. We have ability as long as we have any time to spare after earning our daily bread and any money to spare after paying for it.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Greed Hardens the Heart (420).

Christmas Evans, the great Welsh preacher, used this miracle as the basis of a remarkable sermon which was the especial favorite of Dwight L. Moody. After describing the vigorous efforts of the swineherds, Evans proceeds: "Never was there such a running and whipping and hallooing; but down go the hogs before they are aware of it. One of them said, 'They are all gone.' 'No, sure, not all gone into the sea!' 'Yes, everyone of them, the black hog and all. They are all drowned! The devil is in them! What shall we do now? What shall we say to the owners?' 'What can we say?' said another, 'we must tell the truth—that is all about it. We did our best—all that was in our power. What could any man do more?' So they went on their way to the city to tell the masters what had happened. 'John, where are you going?' exclaimed one of the masters. 'Sir, did you know the demoniac that was among the tombs there?' 'Demoniac among the tombs? Where did you leave the hogs?' 'That madman, sir—' 'Madman! Why do you come home without the hogs?' 'That wild and furious man, sir, that mistress was afraid of so much—' 'Why, John, I ask you a plain and simple

question—why don't you answer me? Where are the hogs?' 'That man who was possessed with the devils, sir—' 'Why, sure enough, you are crazy! You look wild! Tell me your story, if you can, let it be what it may.' 'Jesus Christ, sir, has cast the unclean spirits out of the demoniac; they are gone into the swine; and they are all drowned in the sea; for I saw the tail of the last one!'" And when they came to Jesus, they preferred the hogs and their gains to saving men and to him.

Avarice (421).

Avarice is rarely the vice of a young man; it is rarely the vice of a great man; but Marlborough was one of the few who have, in the bloom of youth, loved lucre more than wine or women, and who have, at the height of greatness, loved lucre more than power or fame. All the precious gifts which nature had lavished on him he valued chiefly for what they would fetch. At twenty he made money of his beauty and vigor. At sixty he made money of his genius and glory.—Macaulay.

Wealth's Burdens (422).

I was born in poverty, and would not exchange its sacred memories with the richest millionaire's son who ever breathed. What does he know about mother or father? These are mere names to him. Give me the life of the boy whose mother is nurse, seamstress, washerwoman, cook, teacher, angel and saint all in one, and whose father is guide, exemplar and friend. No servants to come between. These are the boys who are born to the best fortune. Some men think that poverty is a dreadful burden and that wealth leads to happiness. What do they know about it? They know only one side; they imagine the other. I have lived both, and I know there is very little in wealth that can add to human happiness beyond the small comforts of life. Millionaires who laugh are rare. My experience is that wealth is apt to take the smiles away.

The Gifts of the Poor (423).

A flower girl, who sold buttonhole bouquets at a half penny, near Charing Cross, London, heard that there were millions without even the knowledge of salvation, and she went to the vicar of one of the churches, and asked him to put her down for forty shillings every twelve months. Not long after she was run over on the Strand and fatally injured. At the hospital, when her clothes were removed, a little bag was found about her neck, and on it were the words "For the poor heathen." Inside were

forty farthings—showing the way in which she was saving the promised sum. When the facts became known these farthings were sold at auction, and every one was bought for a sovereign, and so the poor girl was credited with a donation of $200.

Another touching case is reported of five pence given by a poor Yorkshire woman, "to send a bit of the bread of life to the poor heathen." It being known that she and her husband were among the abjectly poor, it was interesting to learn how this five pence was saved; and it proved that this humble couple, whose main meal of the day consisted of "taters," saved the potato peelings for a year and sold them for five pence!

All Spent on Self (424)

A well-known gentleman, who sometimes acted as an unpaid collector for a very important missionary society, called one day on a merchant's house to solicit a contribution. Often he had been denied at the office with the words, "I can't afford it;" and in the grand residence, as his eyes rested on the magnificence which several open doors unveiled, he began to discern that there was some truth in the apology after all.

The owner of the house shortly appeared. His visitor explained the reason of his call, but immediately added, "I see, sir, that you really can not afford it, and I can not think of presenting any claim upon you. Such a scale of expenditure, as I see indicated by everything around me, can indeed leave you little, if anything, for the cause of Christ. I must look elsewhere for support to our operations. Good-morning, sir."

Giving As To A Pauper (425).

In the Old Testament the people were required to bring as offerings to the Lord the very best. These were given to the priests, but the Lord spake of the acts as done to himself. For this reason no defective gift could be received. The gift might be of little value—a pair of turtle-doves or a pigeon, but it must be a good one, not blind, nor lame, nor sickly. It might be but a dish of flour, or a vessel of oil, or a honey-comb, but in every case it must be the very best, because it was offered as a present to the Lord. And when the people lost this idea; when they gave as they would to a pauper, bringing the lame, the blind, and the sick for sacrifice, and placing polluted or stale bread upon Lord's altar. What does the Lord say? He says "It is evil. Offer it now to thy governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person?"

SERVICE XXVIII.

Christian Heroism.

Joshua 1:7.

"Only be thou strong and very courageous."

Lesson:—Daniel 6:10-28.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Christ confers blessings** upon his followers.

2. **Christ demands virtues and graces** of them. Among these is **courage.**

3. **Christ inspires courage** in his followers by his (1) Presence, (2) Promises of help, (3) Example.

4. **History is rich** in the annals of **Christian courage.** (1) Martyrs, (2) Missionaries, (3) Heroes in everyday life.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Christian Heroes. (427)—It calls for more real heroism to be true to Christ and his standards in our ordinary, everyday life, than to stand the test of physical martyrdom for Christ in a foreign missionary field. To be confronted with the opportunity of dying for our faith is a challenge that usually calls out the best in us. Merely to face the opportunity of living for our faith, and that in what seem to us the commonplace, uninteresting circumstances of a humdrum home or business life, year after year, with no great change in prospect, does not seem like a challenge to heroism at all. For this very reason it is the more of a challenge. Endurance is more heroic than a spurt; it takes endurance to live the Christ-life for thirty, forty, sixty years of uneventful service. Such a life honors Christ, and he honors such a life, as the most convincing evidence of the power of Christ that the world can know.—St. Louis Christian Advocate.

Be Not Afraid. (428)—Our age has many timid Christians. It is at least an abnormal introspective sort of piety. Perhaps it has been partly the cause of the very evil which we deplore—that so few men are casting their whole influence soundly and consistently on the side of the Church of Christ. An excess of anxiety about one's self is the negative side of religion. Its true positive side is self-sacrifice. Christ spared not himself. God gave his best for us. The love of God is the love of men made in his image, and exactly as in war the hero is like the officer

who said to his soldiers: "Men, we are commanded to go to that place; we are not commanded to return; let every one who dares follow me"—so the true Christian heroism takes into its view the whole body of men. It is, therefore, a brotherhood. Each learns to live as a part of a common whole. Men sometimes talk of the Church as if it were a sacred device for saving individuals by certain objective means—a sort of charmed society of men received each alone and separated by special grace of election from all the rest of mankind. For one to be a member of Christ, a child of God and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven, he must be known to himself and others to be in His church.—Hill.

Patience. (429)—Courage, I dare say to you, and patience. No one ever carried Christ's cross without coming near to Christ himself, and where Christ is, the light is sure to break. No sacrifice you make, no service you render, but is bringing you nearer to the heart of things, for the heart of the universe is love.—John Watson.

Do Right. (430)—You are not responsible for consequences or results. Do right, and leave the consequences with Him who is truth, and loves and guards his own. If we do evil that good may come, we take the matter out of his hands into our own. There is an uprightness of speech as well as of action that we should strive to attain. Love the truth, follow the truth, and practice truth in word, thought, and deed.—John B. Gough.

True Friend. (431)—One should exercise moral courage in behalf of absent friends. The French have a proverb, "The absent are always in the wrong," meaning, of course, that they are powerless to defend themselves if their motives are aspersed, or their characters defamed. I have a horror of the person who can sit still, holding his or her peace, when the reputation of a friend is assailed. Silence is not golden in such circumstances, but, on the contrary, is the basest alloy. Do not suffer in yourself moral cowardice, when a brave word will show that you, at least, are a true friend.—M. E. Sangster.

At Our Posts. (432)—There is a yet harder and higher heroism—to live well in the quiet routine of life; to fill a little space because God wills it; to go on cheerfully with a petty round of little duties, little occasions; to accept unmurmuringly a low position; to smile for the joys of others when the heart is aching; to banish all ambition, all pride and all restlessness in a single regard to our Saviour's work. To do this for a life-

time is a greater effort, and he who does this is a greater hero than he who for one hour storms a breach, or for one day rushes onward undaunted in the flaming front of shot and shell. His works will follow him. He may not be a hero to the world, but he is one of God's heroes; and though the builders of Ninevah and Babylon be forgotten and unknown, his memory shall live and be blessed.—The Parish Visitor.

True Bravery. (433)—Bravery does not consist in brusqueness and bravado and bluster. To speak the truth boldly one need not be a boor or a bear. The bully is not the ideal hero. Courage of the bull-dog sort is at a wide remove from courage of the Christ-like sort. The kingdom and patience of Jesus go hand in hand. There is a so-called maintaining one's self-respect which is simply a manifesting one's impudence. "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if well, why smitest thou me?" was Christ's courteous protest against the rude blow of an officer; but the courtesy had no weakness in it. Where grace salts courage, the courage is not noisy or dogged or defiant, but marked by a quiet courtesy in the very repose of conscious power. Without the thunder of rude assertion, it yet loses nothing of the spirit of unalterableness in its respectful speech.

Duty and Heroism. (434)—Heroism, the finest earth can show, is revealed in him who steadily works on, unpraised and unnoticed, doing faithfully that which is intrusted to him by the Master, be it small or large, and standing in his place to the end with undiminished enthusiasm, however inconspicuous, ill-requited, and laborious the post. This requires a courage not often seen, and far nobler than that exhibited on battlefields. Quiet endurance is much harder than spectacular exploits in high places.

Courage. (435)—Christian courage. It is sustained by the sense of a divine presence. Constantly do these disciples appeal to the name of Jesus as their authority in the face of human prohibition. Coupled with this was a consciousness of God's presence with them in the presence of these high earthly dignitaries. "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. There being two here to judge us, which shall have the precedency? When God riseth up, what shall man do but take the second place? When God comes near to us, what place at all is left for the fear of man?" The rulers had not been with Jesus, and had not learned this.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

A Hero of the Civil War (436).

A writer on board the "Monitor" in the great naval encounter with the "Merrimac," says: "Soon after noon a shell from the enemy's gun, the muzzle not ten yards distant, struck the forward side of the pilot-house directly in the sight-hole or slit, and exploded, cracking the second iron log and partly lifting the top, leaving an opening. Rear-Admiral Worden was standing immediately behind the spot, and received in his face the full force of the blow, which partly stunned him, and filling his eyes with powder, utterly blinding him. The injury was known only to those in the pilot-house and its immediate vicinity. The flood of light rushing through the top of the pilot-house, now partly open, caused Worden, blind as he was, to believe that the pilot-house was seriously injured, if not destroyed; he therefore gave orders to put the helm to starboard and 'sheer off.' He was a ghastly sight, with his eyes closed and the blood apparently rushing from every pore in the upper part of his face. He told me that he was seriously wounded, and directed me to take command. I assisted in leading him to a sofa in his cabin, where he was tenderly cared for by Dr. Logue, and then I assumed command. Blind and suffering as he was, Worden's fortitude never forsook him; he frequently asked from his bed of pain of the progress of affairs, and when told that the 'Minnesota' was saved, he said, 'Then I can die happy.'"

Robertson's Courage (437).

When F. W. Robertson was warned by a woman that his "preaching would get him into trouble," he calmly answered: "I don't care." "But," she said, "Mr. Robertson, do you remember where 'don't care' brought the man?" "Yes," said Robertson, with utmost seriousness, "to a cross."

Brave Dr. Duff (438).

Moody says: "Five years ago I went to Edinburgh and stopped a week to hear one man speak—Dr. Duff, the missionary. I went to light my torch with his burning words. He fainted in the midst of a speech. When he recovered, he said, 'I was speaking of India, was I not?' And they said he was. 'Take me back that I may finish my speech.' They did so, and, with flaming ardor, he exclaimed, 'Although I have spent twenty-five years in India, and lost my constitution, if Scotland has no

more sons to give to the Lord Jesus, I will be off to the banks of the Ganges tomorrow.' "—The Earnest Worker.

Like the Master (439).

When Felix Neff undertook the pastorate of the High Alps a neat cottage was built for him, in the pleasantest spot in the parish. But his anxiety to reach all the people was such that he never spent more than three days in a month there. With a staff in his hand and a wallet on his back he traveled from this point twelve miles westward, sixty eastward, twenty southward, and thirty northward. While his strength lasted he never slept three consecutive nights in the same bed, nor allowed himself a day's repose. The faith of which this zeal is the flame is the victory that is overcoming the world.—The Earnest Worker

Pattison (440).

Courage is fundamental to manhood, to all noble character. We thrill as we read of the brave Daniel, the gallant in war, Perry on Lake Erie, the brave soldiers at Gettysburg, those at San Juan hill. How true of our great Christians! Bishop John Coleridge Pattison would not endanger the lives of his boatmen when he approached a strange island in his missionary labors. Leaving his whale boat outside the lagoon, he used to plunge overboard and swim ashore with his Bible in his teeth, and the watching boatmen would see him walk up the beach unharmed amidst savages brandishing their war-clubs but awed by his unmoved courage. When at last he was murdered on the beach at Santa Cruz, it was a martyrdom that he had long discounted and that had no terrors for him.

Conquering Cowardice (441).

There have been many instances which go to prove that a young soldier ought not always to be hastily sacrificed for flinching in his first engagement. Upon one occasion, during a desperate assault in which the attacking column was under a withering fire, I saw a company officer desert his men and run to the rear, as pale as a corpse, trembling like an aspen, the picture of an abject craven. He even tore off his shoulder straps, that he might not be recognized as an officer. He heeded neither urgings nor threats; he was past all shame; he was absolutely demented. It was all the more distressing because he was a man of great intelligence, and possessed many good qualities. When the engagement was over, the only question seemed to be whether he should be cashiered or shot, but he begged so

hard of his commanding officer to give him another trial, to grant him one more chance to redeem himself from disgrace, and gave such earnest pledges for his future conduct, that he was finally released from arrest and allowed to go into battle again with his company. He fulfilled his pledges most religiously. Whenever there was danger he was seen in the midst of it. His conduct in every subsequent fight was that of a hero, and he was finally promoted to the rank of a field officer. He had effaced the blot from his escutcheon. The man was no coward at heart; he had for the moment, in army parlance, "lost his grip" under that first murderous fire.

Heroism (442).

During the siege of Havre in 1563, the plague decimated the English troops far more than the attacks of the French. They fell in swathes like grass under the scythe, and the physicians died at their side. Thousands of workmen were throwing up trenches under the walls, and thousands of women were carrying and wheeling earth for them. Reinforcements were hurried over by hundreds and then by thousands. Hale, vigorous English countrymen, they were landed on that fatal quay: the deadly breath of the destroyer passed upon them, and in a few days or hours they fell down, and there were none to bury them; and the commander could but clamor.

One of the secrets of Victor Hugo's power over the French people was their memory of the following: When the disasters of the Franco-German war were falling thickly, and the iron band was closing round Paris, word came that Victor Hugo was coming to the city. He came at the very moment that the investment was complete, with the last train, the last breath of free air. On the way he had seen the Bavarians, seen villages burned with petroleum, and he came to imprison himself in Paris. A memorable ovation was given him by the people, and they never forgot his voluntary sharing of their sufferings.

When Garibaldi died, the legislative bodies adjourned; the public buildings were draped in black. King Humbert sent a kingly message, saying that his father had taught him in childhood to reverence Garibaldi, and when he grew to manhood he found the reverence was turned to love. Provision was made by the nation to purchase the island which was part of Garibaldi's fame, and the Romans carried his bust through the streets and set it in the Capitol.—One Thousand Illustrations.

SERVICE XXIX.

The Grace of Kindness.

Ephesians 4: 32.

"And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted."

Lesson:—1 John 3: 14-24.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **God's goodness to us** should prompt us to be kind to others.

2. **The burdens and difficulties** of many lives should prompt it.

3. **Our own need** of forbearance and sympathy should prompt it.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Kindness. (444)—Considerateness is the angel in the house. How manifold are the sins against it! Kindness is the unwritten law of society. All politeness is based upon it and one of the pleasures of mingling with cultured and refined men and women is that they have learned, outwardly at least, this law. The man who offends against the recognized customs of society becomes impossible. Therefore it is that cutting, sarcastic, sneering, and cynical personalities are forbidden. It may seem vastly clever to say a smart thing; it may be a sweet morsel under the tongue to sum up the opponent in a scoffing epigram; it may be very damaging to make rude and annoying allusions, but society, which knows how to assume the virtues of Jesus, passes such men over, and leaves them out of its roll of honor.—Rev. W. M. Clow.

Our Shadows. (445)—Peter's shadow had healing power in it. The sick upon whom it rested even for a moment, as he passed by, became strong and well, and rose up cured and happy. There are those in every community who carry with them, wherever they go, a like influence of healing and blessing. They bear into a sick room a delicate sympathy which not only enters into the experience of the suffering, but puts new cheer and hope into the heart of the sufferer. They speak encouraging and inspiring words. Their face has in it a message of cheer wherever it appears. They bring some promise of God, some word of hope and encouragement. The discouraged man they

meet is made to feel not only that he has found a friend who is truly interested in him, but also that, after all, his case is not so hopeless as he imagined it to be, and that he need not despair. He is ready to try again. It is a blessed thing to carry such cheer and sympathy to despondent hearts.—Forward.

Others. (446)—Charity does not require of us that we should not see the faults of others, but that we should avoid all needless and voluntary observing of them; and that we should not be so blind to their good qualities, when we are so sharp-sighted to their bad ones.

What if others are weak, is that a reason for your no longer keeping any measure with them? You, that complain of their troubling you, do you give nobody any trouble? You that are so shocked at the faults you see, if all to whom you have been troublesome should return the trouble they have had with you, you would be oppressed with the weight. And, besides, even supposing that men had nothing to reproach you with, yet consider, farther, what obligations you lie under from God to show forbearance toward others for which you know you have such abundant occasion at his hands.—Fenelon.

Kind Words Today. (447)—Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead. Fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving, cheering words while their ears can hear them and while their hearts can be thrilled and made happier by them. The kind things you mean to say when they are gone, say before they go. The flowers you mean to send for their coffins, send to brighten and sweeten their homes before they leave them.

If my friends have alabaster boxes laid away, full of fragrant perfumes of sympathy and affection, which they intended to break over my dead body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered by them while I need them. I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy.

Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand for their burial. Post-mortem kindness does not cheer the troubled spirit. Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward over life's weary way.—W. D. Boyce.

Time for Kindness. (448)—Let us take time for the good-by kiss. We shall go to the day's work with a sweeter spirit for it.

Let us take time for the evening prayer. Our sleep will be more restful if we have claimed the guardianship of God.

Let us take more time to speak sweet, "foolish" words to those we love. By and by, when they can no longer hear us, our "foolishness" will seem more wise than our best wisdom.

Let us take time to read the Bible. Its treasures will last when we shall have ceased to care for the war of political parties, the rise and fall of stocks, or the petty happenings of the day.

Let us take time to be pleasant. The small courtesies, which we often omit because they are small, will some day look larger to us than the wealth which we covet or the fame for which we struggled.

Let us take time to get acquainted with our families. The wealth you are accumulating, burdened father, may be a doubtful blessing to the son who is a stranger to you. Your beautifully kept house, busy mother, can never be a home to the daughter whom you have no time to caress.

Let us take time to get acquainted with Christ. The hour is coming swiftly for us all when one touch of his hand in the darkness will mean more than all that is written in the daybook and ledger or in the records of our little social world.

Since we must all take time to die, why should we not take time to live—to live in the large sense of a life begun here for eternity?—Pittsburg Advocate.

Sympathy. (449)—All of us can give helpful sympathy. This contribution is not very attractive because it is not conspicuous. When a rich man endows a hospital or a university the whole world knows it. The gift is spectacular and attractive. It is published in all the newspapers of the civilized world. If one should even give a cup of cold water to some thirsty sufferer, it would be observed, because it is outward and visible. But when an humble saint gives a heart full of sympathy to those who are in trouble, the reporters never hear of it, the papers never publish it, the world knows nothing about it. But who shall say that it is not worth more in the eyes of our Lord than the gifts of genius and wealth?

ILLUSTRATIONS.

He Remembers To Be Kind (450).

I know one old man who has four sons. One of these sons is a man whose hair is almost as white as his father's, but for twenty years he has never missed a week in which he did not send his father a letter. The father, I believe, while he retains a strong affection for all his sons, is particularly tender toward the one who remembers him in this simple fashion. Often the letter is not perhaps particularly interesting; often, indeed, it has to be hurriedly written, but no matter what comes or goes the letter is always in the post office on its accustomed day and always serves as a reminder that the old father has been in his son's thoughts that week. The other sons visit the father more frequently, coming long distances to do so, but though their visits are enjoyed and appreciated, they are sooner or later forgotten, while the weekly letter is an oft-recurring source of satisfaction and pleasure.

Bringing Blessings (451).

Dr. Mary P. Eddy, of Beirut, Syria, writes: "Long before 5 A. M., on summer days, my tent is surrounded by waiting throngs who wonder audibly, why the 'hakimeh' sleeps so late. It is a heart-breaking multitude—the blind groping their way, the helpless borne by friends, pitiful-looking babies carried by their mothers, and tottering old people led by their children. At one time the waiting groups were startled by the sudden interruption of the robber chief who held the whole countryside in his sway. Accompanied by a dozen tall, fierce followers, armed like himself to the teeth, he entered the room seeking aid for one of the number who had an ugly scalp wound and a finger nearly severed. They gazed curiously at the shelves filled with bottles and boxes; they looked askance at the strange, glittering instruments; they stared at the sterilizing apparatus in the deep window recesses, and the traveling chests arranged for an operating table. 'Mashallah!' says the leader. 'Has your country many daughters like you? Truly, our work is but to despoil and deface; yours is to restore and repair.'

"In one place where I had straightened the cross-eyes of a number of maidens, a Moslem said to me, 'You have provided those destitute ones with homes by your skill; you have laid up more merit in heaven than if you had journeyed to Mecca!'"

Kindness (452).

It was a cold, raw morning, and the rain came down in driving sheets, and the chill northeast wind found its way to the very heart of the pedestrian who had ventured forth. The street was practically deserted save for the rows of boxes of ashes set out for removal, and the usual dilapidated ash-cart, which came slowly around the corner. The ash-man, old and worn, stopped the wagon and started to deposit the rubbish in the cart, when a thought seemed to come into his mind. He hesitated, looked at the horse shivering in the cold, and then, without a second thought, whipped off his dilapidated overcoat, threw it over the horse's back, and, turning up the collar of his threadbare jacket, he went manfully to work.—Homiletic Review.

A Christian Grammar (453).

The Bishop of Cambridge once gave a lesson in "Christian grammar" to a class he was teaching. He said: "We have all learned to say in school:

"'First person—I;
Second person—Thou;
Third person—He.'

But that is wrong in Christian grammar, so wrong that to put it right, one has to turn it quite upside down. The Christian grammar is:

"'First person—He;
Second person—Thou;
Third person—I.'

And 'he' means God, the first person in the first place. Then 'thou' means one's fellow man, and 'I' myself comes last."

Gracious Ministry (454).

How well this one obeyed Christ's teaching! Oberlin was rescued from death in the snow, between Strassburg and the Ban de la Roche, by a wagoner, who declined reward. "Tell me, at least, your name." "Tell me," said the wagoner, "the name of the good Samaritan." "His name is not on record in the Bible." "Then permit me to withhold mine." This agrees with Jesus's words, "When thou doest alms let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." He made so little parade of his giving that Oberlin, who stood as near to him as his right hand to his left, could not discover who he was.

What Brought Her? (455).

A useful and active member of a certain church told a younger woman in it, one day, the story of her membership. "Years ago I was a maid in a house near that of your family," she said, "and I was very shy and afraid to come to church. I did not think anybody cared whether a servant went to church or not; but one day your mother spoke to me very kindly at the gate, and asked me to go with her to the prayer meeting. I went, and every word seemed to be for me. I went several times, both to church and to prayer meeting, and then your father spoke to me about my interest in the church, and asked me to join it. That is how I came to be a Christian—not by the work of any teacher or evangelist, but just because of two Christians who cared enough to help me to God."

Two small acts of Christian brotherhood—how direct a work they did! Yet the busy woman who asked the housemaid at the gate to come to prayer meeting, and the busy man who spoke to her after church, probably thought they had little chance to do anything toward saving souls. They did what they could, along their daily way—that was all; but really that is all that is needed to produce true and immediate results. The busy church member who leaves all efforts to bring people to church, to the minister, is missing a daily opportunity and a daily blessing. "They cared enough to help me to God"—that is the secret of true ministry for Christ, and there is always time for it and place for it in every life. If every young Christian would but believe this, and practice it, the churches would be filled, and the minister would feel the power of a hundred helpers behind every sermon preached.—Forward.

Sympathy (456).

A little hand stole softly
Into my own that day
When it needed the touch that I loved so much
To strengthen me on the way.
It seemed to say in a strange, sweet way,
"I love you, and understand;"
And calmed my fears as my hot heart-tears
Fell over that little hand.
Perhaps there are tenderer, sweeter things
Somewhere in the sun-bright land,
But I thank God for his blessing
In the clasp of that little hand. —Frank L. Stanton.

SERVICE XXX.

Christ Stilling Life's Storms.
Matthew 8:26.

"Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm."

Lesson:—Mark 4:35-41.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Life a voyage.**
2. **Tempests** often arise.
3. **Christ alone** can still them.
4. Be sure that **Christ is in your boat.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

The Great Calm. (459)—When a man has nothing more to lose, when his hopes are all beyond the grave, when we listen without terror to the ebbings and flowings of the tide of life and the rush of its storms—then, after the night, to us the day will come back, and after the tempest a great calm. We know then it is God's work, and that God loves us better than we can love ourselves. We know then that all our life is guided by him, so that we find consolation and contentment; and if we have those two things with us—consolation in all our sorrows and contentment in any loss—we have the richest blessings which God can give us.—Frederick W. Farrar.

Christ in the Ship. (460)—We are all voyagers on the sea of life, and we shall not get across, any of us, without storms. Some of us may have very much less of these than others. Some sailors get easy winds, and sunny days, and prosperous voyages, and happy escapes. Others are always unfortunate, as they say. They are becalmed, or overladen, or badly manned, or ill-piloted. Almost every voyage is a mishap; and they tumble and scramble through their life, beggared and shipwrecked at every turn. But the weather of this voyage or its chance is a secondary question. Let the first question be, is Christ with us in the ship? It matters little how calm and smiling the sea at the outset if he be not with us. Most of us, in youth, flatter ourselves that the voyage will be easy and prosperous. These treacherous waters may soon tell another tale. Yet, if he be

with you and in you, it matters little how the waters rage. Only have faith in him, and you shall see how the danger crushes your home. Your knees fail and your hands hang down. Believers, why is this? Why should it be? Where is your faith? Let not your heart be troubled. Ye believe in God; believe also in Jesus. You believe in his Almightiness, as the Christ of God, to whom all things in providence are entrusted for his people's sake. Is there anything in your lot or life he cannot master, whom the winds and waves obey? You believe in his wisdom. Are not your times in his hand? And your times of storm and terror you have found before to be his times of help and healing.. You believe in his Love; and his love is never more active toward you than in the tempest of trial. You believe in his Faithfulness,—that his promise stands sure, "I will never leave thee, nor never, never forsake thee."—Laidlaw.

God's School. (461)—God keeps a school for his children here on earth, and one of his best teachers is disappointment. My friend, when you and I reach our Father's house, we shall look back and see that the sharp-voiced, rough-visaged teacher, Disappointment, was one of the best guides to train us for it. He gave us hard lessons; he often used the rod; he often led us into thorny paths; he sometimes stripped off a load of luxuries; but that only made us travel the freer and the faster on our heavenly way. He sometimes led us down into the valley of the death shadow; but never did the promise read so sweet as when spelled out by the eye of faith in that very valley. Nowhere did he leave us so often, or teach us such sacred lessons, as at the Cross of Christ. Dear old rough-handed teacher! We will build a monument to thee yet, and crown it with garlands and inscribe on it: "Blessed be the memory of Disappointment!"—Herald and Presbyter.

A Jesus View. (462)—The great Master hand sends the thoughts of sorrow, of joy, of strength, into our life in varying forms as mighty means under the Spirit's power, to mold and bring us into the Divine image, to bring our life to the great expression of beauty that he had planned, for, "to stand by the side of Jesus Christ and look upon life and its possibilities is to behold a vision of marvelous beauty." It is this ever-deepening vision of life that is the Christian's privilege as he walks by the side of his Master, touches the hand which is molding his

life into the highest beauty. Though earth is dark, in his presence it is always day..

Fourth Watch. (463)—Divine love does not lift us out of our trouble the moment we get into it; but we are suffered to toil on to the fourth watch of the night, buffeted by wind and wave, and only when our distress reaches the point where it can no longer be borne does He come to our relief. It often puzzles us and puts as strong a strain on the faith as on the muscles. "If it is really God that saves us," we say, "why does he not save us earlier in the night and spare us all that toil and pain?" There should be no great mystery about it. God's purpose is not to render earthly life easy and comfortable, but profitable to men. Smooth seas make poor sailors. It is gales and tempests and white-capped billows that develops seamanship. This is a principle we all adopt with our own children. No wise parent smoothes out all the rough places in the pathway of his son. No effective teacher saves his pupil from the discipline of hardships. Patience is begotten only of pain, courage of danger, power of difficulty and wisdom of necessity.

Blessings in Disguise. (464)—A blow of ill-fortune, even when malicious with its hurts, may also bless. "Out of seeming evil still educing good," is good doctrine as well as good poetry. At the famous siege of Sebastopol, in the Crimean war, a cannon-ball, missing its aim, struck a mountainside near by when from the fissure thus made gushed forth a crystal stream.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Place of Calm (465).

In a sermon, "The Divine Benediction," occurs the following: "One beautiful morning when the train stopped at Falls View to give the passengers a glimpse of the Falls of Niagara, I helped out an old lady who was taking the first railroad ride in the eighty-three years of her life. She was coming West to die in the home of her son, who lived in Illinois. He was the only child left of the eight she had reared to manhood and womanhood. The passengers, as is their custom, soon fell into clusters on the brink of the precipice, I watched and waited to see what powers of interpretation eighty-three toilful and tearful years had given to this simple soul, the venerable grandmother, the mother of seven buried children. She stood silent and motionless. At last the bell rang, and as she turned she

said, with traces of tears in her voice, but none in her eyes, 'Mister, what a deal of troubled waters is there!' and that was all. Yes, there is a 'deal of troubled waters' at Niagara, but farther down the waters cease their troubling; and even the troubled waters of Niagara find peace at last in the bosom of the great ocean." So to those who hear the divine voice above the tempest's roar shall come His peace.—Sunday School Journal.

Storms (466).

The Saddle Mountain Mission Indians sent a letter to an Indian agent whose young son had suffered amputation of a leg, in which they said: "To day we have learned that great sorrow has come to your life because your boy, whom you love very dearly, has had to suffer again. We are only poor Indians, and we cannot help you any, but we all feel that we can tell you that we are sorry for you and for him. When a big storm comes, our horses bunch together between the mountains, and stand with their heads down, trying to keep each other warm. A great storm of trouble has come to you and to us, lately. Let us put our hearts together, and with our heads bowed down try to comfort each other under the shadow of the mighty Rock, Jesus. We are poor Indians and cannot help you any, but we can promise you that we will be good citizens and not give you any trouble. We put our heart beside yours in your trouble, and pray that both you and your boy may meet us some day in the home Jesus is preparing for us all."—Citizens of Tomorrow.

A Disappointment (468).

In an old chonicle of the middle ages, we are told that God sent, once upon a time, two angels to the earth with very definite instructions. Both were provided with large receptacles and were told to travel to and fro through the earth, and there to gather, the one the petitions, and the other the thanksgivings of the children of God. They were about a long time and finally returned. The angel of prayer—we are told—was staggering under a heavy burden and, besides the bag on his back, was carrying a large bundle of prayers in each hand. His face was beaming with joy. Indeed, God's people on the earth were prayerful people! But the angel of thanksgiving wore a look of disappointment. He had worked very hard and searched very diligently, but all he brought back was a meagerly-filled pouch. Surely the children of God were forgetful of answered prayers

SERVICE XXXI.

The Great Salvation.

1 Timothy 1: 15.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

Lesson—John 3: 14-21.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Who?** "Christ Jesus."
2. **What?** "Came into the world." (Bethlehem).
3. **Why?** "To save sinners." (Calvary).

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Try His Yoke. (469)—Let His invitation, then, find its way to your heart. Everything that burdens you is a reason for your coming—everything that makes you anxious, everything that gives you a sense of your own weakness. You are not doing yourself justice; may I not say, you are not satisfying your conscience until you listen to Christ's invitation and come to him? Some friendships would not help you; you would find a want of understanding, an unsuitableness in many persons: in him you will find a perfect adaption to you. You will find that all that is good in you is drawn out and strengthened, that your better self is asserted, and new possibilities of good awakened in you. If you have found that the way in which you have spent your strength in times past is unremunerative, try his yoke now. If you have found hollowness and dissatisfaction in life, is not this a reason for your now learning of him and truly studying and adopting his method and his spirit? Can you look at your life as a whole and be perfectly content with it? Are you prepared to exhibit it in its inward principles and secret motives, in all that has characterized it, and to justify it to yourself and to all? Are you willing that the whole of it should be spent as you have spent a part?—Dods.

Our Redeemer. (470)—Everything in the way of suffering for sin by way of atonement therefore, so that it might be blotted out and your soul enter into the gladness of conscious deliverance—was endured for you by your Saviour when he voluntarily "bore your sins in his own body." He suffered

for your sin so that you might not. Then why do penance? He did that. And so far as the sins are concerned which you daily commit as a child of God, after you have experienced his gracious mercy, he himself will see to the meting out to you of all needed chastisement for your good. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

It is not at all necessary, then, for you to take yourself in hand and determine the suffering you are to endure, by way of penance, for this, that, or the other sin. It is for you to turn from the sin, with whatever emotions of hate and love, as to sin and holiness, may be wrought in you by the word and Spirit.—Campbell.

Trusting Him. (471)—That saving faith is an act of the will—that voluntary act of the penitent soul by which we take possession of the blessing and benefits of the atonement through Jesus Christ. It is true, faith is the gift of God, that is, the power to believe is divinely wrought, but even then, a man is responsible for the exercise of that power and gift. We are divinely enabled to believe. Indeed, when the soul is penitently passive in the hands of God, the Spirit of the Lord works an inner conviction of the truth that Jesus saves, but that can only be done where the soul yields thoroughly to his will, and consents to trust him implicitly. But such trust involves also an actual surrender of self and a pledge of obedience. The man who wills to repent is also ready and willing to believe. The man who is willing to trust God for salvation, is willing to obey God, and faith is both. Thus faith is the voluntary act by which the soul accepts Christ as Saviour, and chooses him as Lord.—Spreng.

Forgiveness for Penitent. (472)—That the free forgiveness of God benefits no impenitent soul is as clear as that his forgiveness is unconditional; but it is not true that God's forgiveness is conditioned upon repentance. Under the law there is no room for repentance, for the law knows nothing but obedience or punishment. But repentance is possible under the Gospel because "there is forgiveness with God." On the day of Pentecost, Peter stood up and preached; and in his sermon he drove home upon the consciences of the people of Jerusalem the awfulness of their culminating sin—the murder of the Son of God—and showed them at the same time that God had raised

him again from the dead. How could they face God and the Risen Christ? Now, when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."

He Fulfills Our Needs. (473)—Now, Christ meets us at that very point to which reason and experience bring us, and he says, "This very thing you need is what I provide for you—a new nature. I mean nothing else than to produce within you such changes as will make virtue necessary to you." Surveying the world, considering the obstinacy, carelessness, coarseness and viciousness of sinners, Christ saw that salvation was possible, and he has come to save us. And he does so by winning our hearts; by inspiring us with a new love, new views, new hopes, new aims, all of which centre in himself. He proclaims himself as our life. His consciousness of the greatness of his love for us, and of the steadfastness of his purpose to save us, teaches him that we can learn to love him and to be true to him. Nothing short of this will do; the mere thought of him may bring a little purity and elevation into your life, but nothing short of becoming his will save you from your sin. Through him you enter the true life of man. He is the Door. This truth that He came to save sinners is worthy of all acceptance; not to be stumbled at and questioned, not to be coldly acknowledged as possibly true, not to be listened to with sadness and reluctance, but worthy of full, hearty, intense, and most grateful acceptance. —Dods.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Our Best Inheritance (474).

Christ has committed to our hands the gospel. It is the best inheritance which heaven can give. We ourselves are heirs along with our brothers and sisters in heathen lands. In becoming Christians, we ourselves have received our share of the estate. Shall we withhold from our fellow-heirs, who grope in the outside darkness, that which belongs to them? We are indebted to the lost nations in the full amount of the gospel inheritance. Unless we send them the gospel, we fail to give them the square deal, as well as fail in loyalty to our Lord and Master.—Rev. S. J. Porter, D.D.

A Saved Soul (475).

A Christian worker calling at a hospital, sought to guide one of the patients, a young woman, to Christ. She says:

I asked, "Is that medicine in that glass?" She looked at me strangely for changing the subject so abruptly, but answered, "Yes. ma'am," I looked at her and asked firmly, "Do you really believe that is medicine?" She hesitated and with firmness answered, "Yes, ma'am, I do."

"To say you believe there is medicine in the glass, would it do you any good?" "Oh, no ma'am, I must take it in." "Just the same thing as believing there is medicine and believing there is a Jesus, neither one will do you good unless you take them in. It says your sins are laid on him and if you believe in him you shall have everlasting life."

"But I can't understand it." "No, I know you can't and no one else can understand why God should so love us as to give Jesus to die in our place, and when on the cross he said, 'It is finished,' that means that he made the way to heaven for you. Only believe in him. The Lord hath laid on him your sins, these are the words of God, do you believe them?" "Well," she said, "God cannot lie, and is it a sin for me not to believe him?" I quoted John 3:36. She then asked, "Do you ever believe anything you can't understand?" "O, yes I do, for God says a great many things which are true, and it doesn't matter if I understand or not, he only tells me to believe, and I do."

"Musn't I do something so as to be saved?" "Yes," I said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ." She looked at the verse and said, "That says believe in him." "Yes, it means to believe a thing because God says so." I asked her if God would come to her, the God who knows her very thoughts, and tell her that all her sins were laid on Jesus, would she believe it?" "Yes," she said, "I would then." "Well, now the way God speaks to you is through this book, and says your sins are all laid on Jesus." "Must I believe in it just because it says so there?" I told her, "Yes for we would not know it if God wouldn't have written it down." I repeated very slowly several times, "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." She again said, "God cannot lie." I then asked, "Do you believe it?" "I do," she said firmly, "because God says so."

The Life-Bringing Gospel. (476).

When, in the year 1832, cholera raged in Ireland, a priest exhibited to the people a piece of burning turf which, he said, had come from heaven. Giving many of them a piece, he bade them kindle from it a fire upon the hearth, in order to guard the home against the angel of pestilence; but to make the remedy effective, each householder must carry some of the sacred fire to his stricken neighbor's hearth. Thus the whole land would be saved from the scourge. Here is a striking illustration of the spread of the gospel; sin is the destroying pestilence, the gospel is the burning turf which brings life. Christ is the original dispenser of this saving remedy, and each one shall receive it for himself and pass it over to his brother man; so shall the whole earth be filled with its life-giving power.—The Lutheran Quarterly.

He Bore Our Sins (477).

But it must never be forgotten that the death of the cross was the act of the whole Deity. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." "Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself to God." "My Father, which dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." The Son did nothing of himself; and how much less could he have wronged his greatest work apart from his Father! He was only translating into human guise and language acts and deeds which he saw his Father do. And so in the cross we find the eternal God taking to himself the consequences of human sin; himself becoming the propitiation for the sin of the world; bearing it himself; pressed under it as a cart is pressed under sheaves; and putting it away.—F. B. Meyer.

What Christ Asks (478).

What Christ in fact demands is just that a man live as each of us in his best moments desires to live, and as our mothers prayed we might live—on the level of an honest, brave, clean, unselfish manhood. This may require sacrifices and denials, for indeed no man can do anything in this world without work and suffering; but the very effort is in itself noble and blessed. Perfect we may never be this side of the grave, very imperfect we may be to-day; but Christ does not expect that an acorn will be a tree in a year, nor that in many years we shall rise to the full height of character. He asked that young man to surrender his wealth because that surrender was for him the test of sin-

cerity, and then to follow Him. He asks us to surrender any habit or sin which comes between us and spiritual nobility, and then to follow him. Sincere we must be, some sacrifice we must make, and for the rest we must follow in the steps of the Lord till we grow into his likeness. It is a splendid endeavor and in its very difficulties and elevation lie its greatness and its success.—Ian Maclaren.

Salvation for All (479).

One day I went to the king's palace and saw the splendid furniture and the beautiful rooms. As we stood in the corridor, the king himself passed down and graciously nodded to us. On another occasion we went to see the king reviewing his troops. Amid all the military show one incident touched me most. A little sweep came running past the spot where the king was on his horse. His face was black and his feet were bare, but as he passed the monarch of Sweden, he raised his dirty hand and saluted his sovereign. The king smiled upon the little fellow and returned the salute. Immediately afterward a dashing officer came galloping up on a fine horse. His uniform shone like gold, and his sword rattled as he careened bravely along. He also saluted the king. The king saluted back with the dignity of a sovereign, but I thought I missed the kindly gleam of the eye with which he had greeted the waving of the little sweep's dirty hand, and I said to myself: "The king loves the little sweep as much as the fine officer, and I love him for it." And so it is with the King of kings, whose smile of love and encouragement is for all, even the lowliest and ever for the needy.—Gypsy Smith.

Your Verdict (480).

What verdict are you passing on Christ? When you continue some habit which he condemns, or choose some way which he forbids, or cherish low, self-indulgent thoughts, you are passing your verdict on the claim of Christ. You are crying, "I have no king but Caesar." And on the other hand there is a verdict which a man passes when he bows down to Christ's law and accepts his love which is also unalterable. Sin may blot his days. The shame of disloyalties shadow his face. The sorrow of a lessened blessedness may sadden his spirit. Yet he knows of the day and the hour when he passed his verdict, "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ," and that verdict stands.—Rev. W. M. Clow.

SERVICE XXXII.

A Good Conscience.

Acts 24: 16.

"And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man."

Lesson:—Acts 23: 1-16.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Sin makes discord** between God and man.
2. **Conscience** indicates the degree of harmony or discord.
3. **A righteous life**—one brought into harmony with God's will—means "a quiet conscience."

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Conscience. (481)—There is a peace above all earthly dignities, a calm and quiet conscience.—Shakespeare.

Terrors of Conscience. (482)—Oh, the terrors of an aroused conscience! The fearful reckoning that comes when sin is illuminated by the search-light of an awakened memory! As Dr. Thwing says, "Sin before the moment of commission is often like that image used in the Inquisition, which at a step's distance seems glorious and joy-giving. Sin after commission is like the same image which, once touched, draws the victim into its crushing embrace, piercing eye and heart and limb."—Banks.

Hardened Conscience. (483)—"The worst man is least troubled by his conscience. It is like a lamp that goes out in the thickest darkness."

"Beware of the slight deflection from the straight line of right. If there be two lines, one straight and the other going off at the sharpest angle, you have only to produce both far enough, and there will be room between them for all the space that separates hell from heaven."

Working out our Salvation. (484)—A friend at our elbow is not the highest ambition of the moral life. There must be some wider personal force of judgment, by means of which we grapple with the issues and evils of common affairs, and take our own course. Consulting other people is a poor equipment by itself for moral guidance. We must face the matter for and by ourselves. Life's disasters, be it remembered, are not entirely

due to the misleading advice or influence of others. A man's own errors, the truant outbreaks of conscience, these form another factor in the case. These are responsible alike for mistakes and for the suffering which mistakes entail. So that, if life is to be put right and kept straight, conscience must be purified and strengthened.—Moffatt.

Power of Conscience. (485)—Conscience in the strict sense is a propelling force always pushing a man toward the performance of what is right as he understands it and reproving him if he does not do it. It is not, properly speaking, what the common language so often makes it—a man's judgment as to what is right. The latter is often blinded and erring, leading people far astray. No one would pretend that he was not liable to form an erroneous judgment, that he was infallible. The steam-engine drives a boat forward, the rudder directs its course. If the wheel turns the rudder so that the ship is pointed for the rocks, the engine drives the vessel on them, but not through any fault of the engine. When it is said that a man's conscience misleads him, the real meaning is that his intellectual judgment has failed to indicate the best course; and when people in general say that their conscience forbids them to take this or that step, it merely expresses the fact that for certain reasons which may be very good or very poor, they do not consider the step a right one.

Running Away from Conscience. (486)—Conscience should be considerately and tenderly dealt with. Its verdict no individual can escape. Men have traveled over continents to get rid of their guilty conscience. Others have swung themselves prematurely into eternity to put a quietus upon the lashings of an aroused conscience, but it was all in vain. Conscience when violated becomes a terrific scourge. No man can escape from the fearful denunciations of conscience when guilt has been contracted, save by the way of the cross. Redemption through Christ is the only remedy to obtain an easy and approving conscience. Even though no gross sins are committed, and no open and flagrant violation of God's laws are perpetuated, yet the simple rejection of Jesus Christ from the heart and life, is enough to bring condemnation upon the individual.—Evangelical Message.

Trained Conscience. (487)—If a man means to make a living by the use of his arms he trains the muscles of his arms; if he

means to make a living by the use of his voice he exercises his lungs so that he can produce voice; and so of his ears and eyes, as his calling may require. In other words he takes gymnastics suited to his necessities. Peace of conscience is not an accident, but an acquisition; is not a matter of temperament, but of attainment.—Rankin.

Educating Conscience. (488)—What is conscience? Conscience is that power in us by which we discern the moral quality of choices, and through which we are capable of certain feelings concerning such moral choices.

By conscience we discern the moral quality of choices. For example, when any choice sets itself before us, it is instinctive with us,—we cannot help it any more than we can help our breathing,—it is instinctive with us that we throw the choice, as to its motives, either into the class "right" or into the class "wrong." We are all the time passing such judgment on the choices both of ourselves and of others. "That is wrong," or "That is right," we say; if not audibly, at least in thought. We must say it; it belongs to the make and mechanism of our nature to say it; all men say it. Conscience is a universal endowment. It is because of the possession of this conscience, this power of discrimination between what is wrong and what is right in choices, that we rise into the nobleness of moral responsibility, and thus become the proper subjects of moral government.—Wayland Hoyt, D.D.

Power of Good Conscience. (489)—No man need be afraid of persecution of desertion at the hands of his fellows, nor need he quail for sorrow and affliction, if conscience be on his side. He need not fear to die, nor to stand at God's Judgment Bar with this fast and weighty ally. Happy is the man who, like Bunyan's Pilgrim, has made a tryst with conscience to meet him at the river and to accompany him across, for, when in this life, or in that which is to come, a good conscience says, "Well done," it is the voice of the Judge himself.—Ian Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

A Lost Conscience (440).

From Ceylon comes this little story: A tea-planter, who had a glass eye, was desirous of going away to spend the day shooting, but he knew that as soon as the natives who were at work on the plantation heard that he was gone they would not do a

stroke of work. How was he to get off? That was the question. After much thought an idea struck him. Going up to the men, he addressed them as follows: "Although I myself will be absent, yet I shall leave one of my eyes to see that you do your work." And, much to the surprise and bewilderment of the natives, he took out the glass eye and placed it on the stump of a tree, then started on his journey. For some time the men worked industriously, but at last one of them, seizing the tin can in which he carried his food, approached the tree and gently placed it over the eye. This done, they all lay down and slept sweetly until sunset.

And this is a satire on the serene folly of the worldling. He covers his conscience with the book he is reading, the song he is hearing, the pleasure he is having, the money he is making, the work he is doing, and—poor creature—tries to fancy he is secure. But all the time Duty is stretching out a pleading hand and bidding him remember that God never forgets. The eye of the Master is upon him. Its glance is softened by compassion, and a tear is glistening in it, but it carries an admonition in its depths. The voice of the old sage of the Orient conveys a message from the Eternal: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might."—The Communicant.

The Conscience's Voice (491).

O softly spoken words that none but I can hear,
As clear and true they ring upon my ear—
A warning note, or praise for deeds well done,
Or misery, remorse, or hopes that've flown;
My conscience's voice—God's voice from lofty throne.

O sweetly words, dictate the nobler things to me,
That truth be truth, and right from wrong be free;
That I may heed and rightly ascertain
The things of real worth from those of vain;
My conscience's voice—God's softest song refrain.

—G. Williamson Hopkins, in the New York Observer.

Controlled By Conscience (492).

In 1621 the Pilgrims were in sore straits. The existence of the colony depended upon the maintenance of friendly relations with the Indians. One Sabbath morning Chief Samoset and a company of his braves appeared and commenced to make over-

tures of peace by proposing to engage in traffic. It was the holy Sabbath day. According to their religious convictions to engage in this traffic would be to sin. Yet to refuse the overtures of the Indians might be fatal to the little colony. What was there to be done? They did not hesitate. They would not do violence to their consciences, no, not even to save their lives. The Indians went away angry but God converted their anger into friendship. He came to the rescue of those who first of all thought of doing his will.—Wiest.

Conscience Enthroned and Dethroned (493).

Notice the awful misery that results when conscience has been dethroned. At the Diet of Worms, Martin Luther, when requested to recant, replied, "Here I stand. I can do no other."

It is not safe for a man to violate his conscience. Luther saw clearly that man must be loyal to conscience if he would have peace, and disloyalty must be followed by guilt and remorse. Nothing in the whole of Shakespeare is finer or truer than his portraiture of the guilty pair after the black deed has been performed. Lady Macbeth feels that there is not water enough in the ocean to wash her hands clean again. Macbeth actually envies the dead king, and exclaims—

> Better be with the dead,
> Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
> Than on the torture of the mind to lie
> In restless ecstacy. Duncan is in his grave:
> After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
> Treason has done his worst; nor steel, nor poison,
> Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
> Can touch him further.

Truth and Life (494).

Sir Philip Sydney had once to choose between a lie and the loss of his life. He said, "When God has brought me into such a dilema that I must assert a falsehood, or lose my life, he gives me a clear indication of my duty, and that is, to prefer death to falsehood." That is beautiful, that is Christianity in earnest.

Compounding with Conscience (495).

Life has many difficult decisions for the man who wishes at all times to do the right, and sometimes the lines of demarcation seem so dimly drawn that it is difficult for the best of men

to decide on an entirely clear course. An amusing illustration of this is found in an incident related by an old Confederate soldier from the State of North Carolina. Said he:

"I had a friend who was a chaplain in our army—a good man, as such men should be. Several of his own church-members were in the same regiment. He kept a sharp eye on us, and tried to train us in the way we should go. And, when we were rather short for rations, some of the boys brought in a fine young porker. 'Now, boys, that's wrong,' said he. 'It is simply stealing. You ought not to do it.'

" 'Well, our consciences don't trouble us, and yours won't trouble you when we get this meat cooked. You will want some of it too.'

" 'No, I won't eat it. I'd as soon eat stolen meat.'

"But we divided it up among the boys and proceeded to cook a ham in the best possible style. The smell of it fairly made our teeth water, and when it was cooked we were more than ready for it.

" 'There's a fine piece. Cut that off for the chaplain,' said one.

" 'No, I thank you,' said he. 'I said I wouldn't eat it, and I won't, but'—passing up his plate—'I'll take a little of the gravy.' " —Homiletic Review.

Exercising Conscience (496).

Paul "exercised" his conscience as you would a horse for a race. We are apt to think that other people do not have the struggles that we have. Paul strongly combats that idea when he says: "So fight I, as not beating the air; but I keep my body under." It did not come natural to him to have a good conscience. He had to train himself for it, by daily buffetings of his own body, mortifications of his own inclinations, and crucifixions of his own will.—Dean Vaughan.

SERVICE XXXIII.

Deliverance from the Fear of Death.

Hebrews 2: 14, 15.

"That he might deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Lesson:—1 Corinthians 15: 50-58.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Sin entails dread** because of (1) the sense of guilt for the past, (2) **Estrangement** from God in the present, (3) **Despair** for the future.

2. **Salvation delivers from all** and thus forces from the bondage of fear.

3. Christ is **the great Emancipator.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Alive Forever. (497)—Christ's resurrection effectually alters our view of death. The fact of death cannot be sufficiently counterbalanced by a surmise, a hope, a longing, but only by a fact as solid as itself. Such a fact is Christ's resurrection and entrance upon a continued human life. From this fact spring strength, consolation, hope. Already there lives beyond the grave One in whom we live. "Because I live, ye shall live also," said our Lord on the eve of his own death, confident that he would rise again. Whosoever receives his words is armed against all the graver terrors of death. Whosoever believes that Christ is now alive has a future life to look forward to, that may well be an object of hope and desire to the most prosperous of those that live on earth.

Through faith in this Deliverer many weak and naturally timorous persons, although fully alive to their own faultiness, have by the manner of their death left on the mind of their friends as clear a persuasion that Christ was with them as if he had been seen.—Marcus Dods, D.D.

Life for Death. (498)—The death hour has always been regarded as peculiarly solemn. It is a time for the most serious thoughtfulness. Frivolity or indifference when the bands of life are breaking and the curtain of mystery is rising is unnatural or unpardonable. The life of the senses is being dissolved, sight

and hearing are slowly failing and the things which pertain to the body are falling away as if into unreality. The fires of passion, the dreams of ambition, the objects of eager desire, the possessions considered so enviable and necessary, the plans and schemes which held so large a place in the thought, the achievements regarded with so much of pride, the wealth so hardly earned and carefully hoarded, the reputation so jealously guarded, all of these things are passing away like an unsubstantial dream. The solemn thunder of the breakers of the unseen sea is heard; great questions and great fears spring out of the silence and the growing darkness; the realities begin to separate themselves from the unreal and illusory; the soul feels itself being stripped of all its masks and being compelled to see itself reflected in the mirror of truth. Accountability and judgment, long forgotten, perhaps, or denied, become terribly real and certain. The thought of God, long and persistently put away, rises up in overshadowing proportions. What adequate preparation can be made for this supreme hour? It requires the preparation of the whole of life.—The Illustrator.

Refuge from Death. (499)—While we need a refuge from the ills of life we also need a refuge from the dread of death. Montaigne said he feared only fear, and in any form it is a thing to be delivered from. It was the motto of Heinrich V, inscribed in the Kaiseraale at Frankfort on the Main, "Miser que mortem appetit, miserior qui timet." Yet death from of old is named King of Terrors, nor is this fear any sign of weakness of mind. Madame DeStaël offered her physician her fortune if he would take away her fear of death. Vinnet says that "after the happiest as well as after the most wretched of lives it is terrible to die."—"The Ripening Experience of Life."

Resurrection Makes Certain. (500)—What, then, has Easter, with its gospel of a Risen Redeemer, done for this idea of a future life, so universally prevalent wherever man has been found? It has brought certitude. It has lifted the belief in it, based on arguments from nature and reason, into a sublime assurance, based on historical fact. The actual resurrection of Christ from the dead has brought life and immortality to full light. It has demonstrated the continuance of personal existence through and beyond death. It has raised assumption into certified knowledge.—The Lutheran Observer.

Confidence in Future. (501)—We look into the future with

confidence: With confidence in his work of grace for us individually; "the Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." With confidence in the fulfillment of his promise concerning his kingdom. Sometimes the current of the world seems to be strong towards all evil, but the Lord reigns and wrong cannot forever prosper. He who taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come," will not fail in his purpose, for the kingdom is his, and his the power and the glory. In that glory he will come again. —The United Presbyterian.

Life is Death. (502)—There is no death save that death which you and I are dying here and now; for life is death, and death is life; and what we call death is emancipation from all the burdens and bonds and limitations of men; and every death-bed is a resurrection hour; and every summons to death is the summons to the larger life; and those that have gone are not far distant. Still the mountains of the Lord are full of his horses and chariots, though we have no eyes to see them; still on the Mount of Transfiguration Moses and Elijah come down to talk to us, though we will not listen to their voices; still we are come to Mount Zion and unto the spirits of the just made perfect. God help us, not to go back to the old patriarchal age, but to live in the glory of the time in which we are living, the time of him who has brought life and immortality to light!—Lyman Abbott.

Death a Step. (503)—In all likelihood we shall be quite surprised when we have passed through the dark portal, that it was so slight and easy an experience. We dread it now, because we do not really believe that Christ's death has made it all so different. If we believed this, it would give us great confidence. But whether we believe it or not, we shall find it so. A step; a moment; a passage across the Bridge of Sighs; a transition from darkness to light; a birth—that is all. Absent from the body, present with the Lord. No moment of unconsciousness or oblivion! The veil rent, the shell broken, the iron gateway passed; whilst the light and air of the eternal morning break on the emancipated spirit!—F. B. Meyer.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Easter Message (504).

Few households escape the hour of the vacant chair. Very few circles remain permanently unbroken. Sometimes it is a child, sometimes a youth or maiden, sometimes a wife or hus-

band, and sometimes an old man or woman who is taken away. The joy of the Christian is that those who are thus taken are taken home; they go to the Home-land. They need fear no more sickness, no more pain, no more death, no more parting. Beyond these voices there is peace. So Easter-tide comes to us laden with cheer and comfort. It is fitting that we should celebrate Easter in anthems of triumph, and decorate all churches with flowers, and make the service one of triumph and enthusiasm. For without the Resurrection Christ's Gospel would be of none effect. The whole New Testament is keyed to the note of the Resurrection. The apostles preached it, the book of Revelation thrills with it, throughout the long ages the Church has rested her faith without a tremor on the words of Jesus, "I am the resurrection and the life."

Going Home (505).

Chinese Christians never speak of death; they don't like its sound. It is always, "The soul returning to the Father," "Going back to be with Jesus"—some such happy euphemism.—Patton.

Leap in Dark (506).

"I am taking a fearful leap in the dark," cried Thomas Hobbes at the brink of death. Thomas Paine also regarded the touching of this life and the next as "a leap in the dark. O mystery!"

A Resurrection Symbol (507).

"Consider the lilies of the field." We must take our Lord's words exactly. He is speaking of the lilies, of the bulbous plants which spring into flower in countless thousands every spring over the downs of Eastern lands. All the winter they are dead, unsightly roots hidden in the earth. But no sooner does the sun of spring shine upon their graves than they rise into sudden life and beauty, as it pleases God, and every seed takes its own peculiar body. Sown in corruption, they are raised in incorruption; sown in weakness, they are raised in power; sown in dishonor, they are raised in glory—delicate, beautiful in color, perfuming the air with fragrance, types of immortality fit for the crowns of angels. "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." For even so is the resurrection of the dead. Yes, not without divine providence, yea, a divine inspiration, has Eastertide been fixed as the season when the earth shakes off her winter's sleep, when the birds come back and the flowers begin

to bloom, when every seed which falls into the ground and dies and rises again with a new body, is a witness to us of the resurrection of Christ, and a witness, too, that we shall rise again; that in us, as in it, life shall conquer death, when every bird that comes back to sing and build among us, every flower that blows, is a witness to us of the resurrection of the Lord and of our resurrection.—Charles Kingsley.

Triumphs (508).

There are more triumphant death-beds than we count, if we only remember this—true fearlessness makes no parade. O, it is not only in those passionate effusions in which the ancient martyrs spoke sometimes of panting for the crushing of their limbs by the lions in the amphitheatre, or of holding out their arms to embrace the flames that were to curl round them—it is not then only that Christ has stood by his servants, and made them more than conquerors—there may be something of earthly excitement in all that. Every day his servants are dying modestly and peacefully, not a word of victory on their lips, but Christ's deep triumph in their hearts—watching the slow progress of their own decay, and yet so far emancipated from personal anxiety that they are still able to think and to plan for others, not knowing that they are doing any great thing. They die, and the world hears nothing of them; and yet theirs was the completest victory. They came to the battle-field, the field to which they had been looking forward all their lives, and the enemy was not to be found. There was no foe to fight with.—F. W. Robertson.

He Is Not Here (509).

Oh, what comfort, what blesed assurance! Even the beloved clay that we are forced to lay in the dust is safe, and shall rise again.

One neighbor whose daughter in her young womanhood had been snatched away by death, in her lamentings said, "That dear little girl, who could never bear to be alone, is now alone all the time. I think of that constantly." This bereaved woman is a Christian, and she will surely be brought to hear the word: Thy daughter shall rise again. And she surely will be enabled to lift her eyes above the grave to the house of many mansions, where her daughter is happy forever.—The Christian Intelligencer.

The Greatest Question (510).

"There comes a time in the history of every man when a certain old question is asked, which you will find in the book of Job. 'If a man die shall he live again?' Where shall I go for an answer to that question? I ask Science, and Science frankly says, 'We know nothing of the resurrection.' Then I ask Philosophy, and Philosophy says, 'I admit there may possibly be a hereafter, and immortality and a resurrection, but I have no answer that can wipe away your tears.' But this Sunday morning I hear the sound of the church bell, and it does not matter whether I find my way into the cathedral, or the conventicle, or on Mars' Hill, the glorious message of Christ's resurrection will be there to meet me.

"'Forever with the Lord,
Amen, so let it be.
Life from the dead is in that word,
'Tis immortality.'"

SERVICE XXXIV.

Transformed By Beholding.

2 Corinthians 3: 18.

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Lesson:—Colossians 3: 1-11.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. Christ is the Christian's **pattern.**
2. Reproduction results from **beholding him by faith.**
3. Numerous **wonderful character transformations** have been wrought by this method.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Saving Self. (511)—"Salvation by character" has been the watch-word of liberalism. Orthodoxy teaches that salvation is by Christ, and character is the ground of salvation, and Christ is an influence, with many others, in the formation of character. The honest man who holds to the creed of salvation by character must live and die in doubt about his salvation, unless his assurance is based upon a low standard of character necessary for salvation or upon a pharisaical spirit which esteems himself better than he is. Salvation by character really fills with despair all who by sin have lost their characters, while salvation by Christ restores character and fills the soul with hope of a perfect character by and by.—Rev. A. C. Dixon.

Author of Salvation. (512)—Regeneration is not the product of the human will, nor is it the result of human activity. The Bible distinctly teaches that the Holy Spirit is the author and finisher of regeneration, and that by this act, man's essential nature undergoes a radical, a miraculous change. It is a spiritual birth, one that is absolutely necessary for citizenship in heaven. Information concerning this important fact is beyond the natural range of human knowledge—hence, it is a matter of divine revelation. Regeneration can not properly be considered by a godless, and, for that reason, all incompetent and hostile school of modern psychology.—Western Recorder.

True Religion. (513)—We want religion which softens the step, and turns the voice to melody, and fills the eye with sunshine, and checks the impatient exclamation and harsh rebuke;

a religion which is polite, deferential to superiors, considerate to friends; a religion which goes into the family, and keeps the husband from being cross when the dinner is late, and keeps the wife from fretting when the husband tracks the newly-washed floor with his boots, and makes the husband mindful of the scraper and the door-mat; keeps the mother patient when the baby is cross, and amuses the children as well as instructs them; cares for the servants, besides paying them promptly; projects the honeymoon into the harvest-moon, and makes the happy home like the Eastern fig-tree, bearing on its bosom at once the tender blossom and the glory of the ripening fruit. We want a religion which shall interpose between the ruts and gullies and rocks of the highway and the sensitive souls who are traveling over them.—Helpful Thought.

Real Christians. (514)—The man who has religion will be moral. If his religion be real he is bound to carry it from the church into his every-day life. If it be worth having, it is something that will not be quarantined in the sanctuary or confined to the prayer meeting. The religious man can be trusted in a business transaction, in the store or in the office just as much as he can be trusted when listening to a sermon. If, however, Jesus is only an exemplar, only one among many moral teachers, all of whom are about equally good; if he is not a redeemer who has made an atonement for sin and who demands of us sorrow for sin and genuine repentance and faith toward God, then we are not so sure about the basis for the man's ethical structure.—Herald and Presbyter.

The Divine Potter (515).

"Thou, Thou art the Potter, and we are the clay;
And morning and evening, and day after day,
Thou turnest the wheel and our substance is wrought
Into form of Thy will, into shape of Thy thought.

"Thou, Thou art the Potter, the wheel turns around;
Thine eyes do not leave it, our atoms were ground
Fine, fine in Thy mills. Oh, the pain and the cost!
Thou knowest their number, not one shall be lost.

"How plastic are we as we live in Thy hands;
Who, who, as the Potter, the clay understands?
Thy ways are a wonder, but oft, as a spark,
Some hint of Thy meaning shines out in the dark

"What portion is this for the sensitive clay!
To be beaten and moulded from day unto day;
To answer not, question not, just to be still,
And know Thou art shaping us unto Thy will.

"This, this may we plead with Thee, Workman Divine,
Press deep in our substance some symbol of Thine,
Thy name, or Thy image, and let it be shown
That Thou wilt acknowledge the work as Thy own."

The Double Life. (516)—If a Christian, you have a double life. Christ, with his Spirit, gives you a nature which is pure and sinless; incapable of transgression, like his own. The new man, that which is born of God, sinneth not, cannot sin. But side by side with it, working through it, working in it, indistinguishable from it to your consciousness by anything by this, that the one works righteousness and the other works transgression—there is the "old man," "the flesh," "the old Adam," your own godless, independent, selfish, proud being. And the one is to slay the other! Ah, these words—crucifying, casting out the old man, plucking out the right eye, maiming self of the right hand, mortifying (making to die) the deeds of the body—they are something very much deeper and more awful than symbols and metaphors. They teach us this—there is no growth without sore sorrow. Conflict is the word that defines man's path from darkness to light. No holiness is won by any other means than this, that wickedness should be slain day by day and hour by hour.—A. Maclaren.

Like a River. (517)—This power of Christ lays hold of the life, cleansing, sweetening, refreshing it, and making it fruitful, like the great river of the soul, as it is pictured by the poet:

"East the forefront of habitations holy
Gleamed to Engedi, shone to Eneglaim,
Softly thereout, and from thereunder slowly
Wandered the waters, and delaying, came.

"Then the great stream, which having seen he showeth,
Hid from the wise, but manifest to him,
Flowed and arose, as when Euphrates floweth,
Rose from the ankles till a man might swim.

"Even with so soft a surge and an increasing,
Drunk of the sand, and thwarted of the clod,
Stilleth and astir, and checked and never ceasing,
Spreadeth the great wave of the grace of God.

"Bears to the marishes and bitter places
Healing for hurt, and for their poisons, balm,
Isle after isle in infinite embraces
Floods and enfolds and fringes with the palm."

The true significance of the change is, therefore, not only felt by the life that experiences it, but is realized also by all those with whom that life comes into contact, so that in the new and spiritual creation, as in the older and physical one, the life that is originated becomes itself the origin of new and ever-increasing life, growing in strength and power and loveliness, till its evolution culminates in the perfection of the God who called it into being.—G. C. Martin.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Christ's Transforming Power (518).

In the apse of St. Sophias, Constantinople, the guide points out a place where there is a hidden face of Christ, portrayed by some early Christian artist. When the Mohammedan conqueror possessed himself of that noble Christian temple, he ordered all Christian symbols to be effaced. This beautiful head of Christ was covered over with canvas. By gazing steadily at the canvas the visitor can assure himself that there is a Christian painting behind it. Perhaps the colours have stained the threads of the canvas faintly, or the interstices have been dragged apart and given pin-point views of the picture, but there it is. When the Christian conqueror again enters the gates of Constantinople the canvas will doubtless be torn away, and this bit of early Christian art be brought to light and restored.

And in spite of the riot and triumph and sacrilege of sin, there is some trace of the Christ-like in every man,—some faint line or decaying feature that suggests the glorious whole once stamped upon him, and that shall yet be stamped upon him anew. Open the gates and let in the conquering King. His own hand shall strip away the sins that hide God's glory

in the soul, and the resplendent image of God shall be seen in you once more.—Rev. F. G. Selby.

Changed (519).

A piece of hunting ground in British Columbia had long been in dispute between two clans of Indians, the Eagles and the Beavers, and finally trial by arms was decided upon, and a date set for the battle upon a Saturday.

Not until within a few hours of the time appointed did the news reach the missionary. It was urgent that he stop the fight; one night's savagery might undo his years of preaching and teaching.

He at once called a conference of the leaders of the clans. But they refused to let him interfere, and to all his warnings returned the answer: "We must fight; but the mission shall not be touched." Finally he secured their promise that there should be no fighting on Sunday and that both clans should attend the church services. But the fight, they said, was only postponed; it was surely to begin on Monday morning. On Sunday at the services the Beavers and Eagles set apart. Usually they mixed together, being closely related both by blood and marriage; but the war spirit now divided families, and showed itself in looks of hatred. Apparently the morning service did nothing to check the desire for a fight on the morrow. The afternoon was equally without effect.

In the evening the missionary made use of the last opportunity by telling once again the story of Jesus' love—how he brought peace and good will to men, and how love for him meant also love for others. Gradually here and there a hardened eye moistened, and before the sermon was done the warriors themselves had broken down and wept. At the close of the service there was a general peace-making. The would-be fighters went home and sang hymns instead of war songs, and Monday morning brought instead of a battle, a cleaning up and putting away of the war tools. The feud was at an end.

A Real Conversion (520).

A father was unwilling to let his ten-year-old daughter unite with the church, although to her pastor she gave every evidence of having entered on her inheritance; he told the father he was sure she made the risen life her own. The father doubted until the day when he saw a playmate slap her in the face. For

just a moment the little girl's face flamed; her hand was raised as if to return the blow. Then suddenly the hand dropped to her side, while a look of peace came to her face. "I doubt no longer,' the happy father said a little later to his pastor.

The Spirit-Regulated Life (521).

A few months ago the papers announced the death of a lady who had long made a livelihood by taking Greenwich time round to the jewellers' shops in the small towns to the west of London. She was the daughter of a watchmaker, and possessed an excellent chronometer which had been bequeathed by her father. When necessary, the authorities of the Observatory kindly regulated it. Every Friday she went to Greenwich, got the standard time, and carried it to her clients, who paid a small fee for the service rendered. She belonged to the old dispensation, and may stand for one of its types. Many provincial towns, and even private firms of watchmakers, are now in direct electric connection with Greenwich, and get the standard time every day. In the United States of America, every telegraph office is linked with the Observatory at Washington. Under the earlier Covenant men who wished to learn of the things of God had to avail themselves of the ministries of the prophets, or sit at the feet of scholars, whose office it was to interpret the books of the law. But under the New Covenant the regenerate soul is brought into direct contact with God, and acquires divine wisdom not by listening to a neighbor, but by heeding swift inward impressions wrought by the wonderful Spirit of God.—Rev. T. G. Selby.

Grace and Morality (522).

Said the noble Ralph Erskine when he saw a robber led to execution: "But for restraining grace I had been brought to this same condition." Said John Bradford, the English martyr, when he saw a man going to Tyburn to be hanged for crime: "There, but for the grace of God, goes John Bradford." The devout Samuel Marsden, the New Zealand missionary, had been basely slandered by some bigoted enemies, he replied to a friend who had reported to him the slander: "Sir, these men do not know the worst; if I should walk through the streets with my heart laid bare, the very boys would pelt me." "I have never heard of any crime," said Goethe, "which I might not have committed."

SERVICE XXXV.

Great Faith.

Matthew 8: 10.

"I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

Lesson:—Matthew 8: 5-13, Hebrews 11: 17-40.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **We have a great Saviour.** "He is able."
2. **Great faith means deep appreciation of his greatness.**
3. **Its rarity.** (Not in Israel).
4. **Its blessedness.** Great faith wins great blessings, (1) Christ's **commendation,** (2) **Salvation,** (3) **Peace** and confidence.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Using Faith. (523)—The misunderstanding has been very prevalent in times past that the true relation of the human soul to the divine life is one of passivity in the presence of that life. As if life could make anyone passive! The mind which has really heard the voice of Christ is most prodigiously active on its own account. Such a mind understands that the influence of the divine life is to arouse to life. We pray to God for help and the answer comes not so much in marvelous results while we stand idly by, as in the opening up of new fountains of energy within ourselves. "Arise" is the word. There is no coming of miraculously intervening angels. There is no suspicion of any laws of gravitation. We simply feel the impulse to arise and find that we can get up. The man healed by Christ was not made other than himself. The Healer put into the man's life power which the man himself could use, and must use. The body was the same, and yet different—different in this, that whereas the man had once lain helpless now he could walk.

Great Faith. (524)—On two occasions, and so far as we know on only two, the Lord stated that he found great faith; that is to say, he found faith in sufficient quantity to warrant an experiment as to its powers. Singularly enough, it was exhibited once by a man, and once by a woman. Of the Centurion, Christ said: "I have not found so great faith in Israel;" and to the Syro-Phoenician woman, He said: "O woman, great is thy faith." Let us draw near to this Adam and Eve of great faith, in search of answers to inquiries of great import as to the result and worth of faith.—Wiseman.

Faith to Shout. (525)—A blind beggar hearing He was passing, cried out, "Mercy, mercy!" The people told him to be quiet; but he shouted the louder, "Have mercy on me!" Jesus invited him, and then some said, as though he might not be quite sure of a blessing, "Be of good cheer, He calleth thee!" They knew Jesus never called and then refused—and so they told the poor man to rejoice. Sinner, be thou of good cheer! The same Jesus calleth thee! As the blind man threw off his cloak lest it should hinder him, so cast off every sin that would stop you—rush through every crowd of difficulties, and falling at the feet of Jesus say, "Have mercy on me! I am blind! I am lost! save or I perish!" Have you a guilty conscience? With that guilty conscience, come! Have you a wicked heart? With that wicked heart, come! Have you nothing with which to purchase His favor? "Without money," come! Rich and poor, masters and servants, old and young, white men and black, sinners of every class, come!—Newman Hall.

Law and Gospel. (526)—An old writer says: "The law showeth us our sin; the Gospel showeth us a remedy for it. The law showeth us our condemnation, the Gospel showeth us our redemption. The law is the word of despair; the Gospel is the word of comfort. The law says pay the debt; the Gospel says Christ hath paid it. The law says to make amends for thy sin; the Gospel says Christ hath made it for thee. The law says, thy Father in heaven is angry with thee; the Gospel says Christ hath pacified him with his blood. The law asks, Where is thy righteousness, goodness, and satisfaction? The Gospel says, Christ is my righteousness, goodness and satisfaction. The law says, thou art bound and indebted to me; the Gospel says Christ hath delivered thee from them all. He that believeth not God's Word believeth not God himself."

Christ then the Church. (527)—Every sinner must cut loose from his sins, and must cleave to the Lord Jesus. Saving faith is vastly more than an opinion or a feeling; it is an act of the soul. It is the act of joining our weakness to Christ's strength, our ignorance to his knowledge, our guiltiness to his atoning love, our wills to his will, ourselves to him. No one is soundly converted, and no one should join the church, until he has joined himself to Jesus Christ. This is the one infallible test. It is not enough to "feel happy;" it is not enough to say, "I am trying to be a Christian;" no soul is safe until it has surrendered uncon-

ditionally to Christ, and has been "born anew" by the Holy Spirit.

The Remedy. (528)—Just as the strengthening of the whole constitution of the body makes any particular and local affection disappear, so by degrees, by the raising of the character, do the lower affections become, not extinguished or destroyed by excision, but ennobled by a new and loftier spirit breathed through them. This is the account given by the apostle. He speaks of the conflict between the flesh and the spirit. And his remedy is to give vigor to the higher, rather than to struggle with the lower. "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."—F. W. Robertson.

Peace of God. (529)—You see Jesus and are led by the Spirit to believe him adequate to all your needs as a sinner. You flee to him as the rock of your refuge and trust your soul to his keeping both now and forever. You receive and rest upon him alone for your salvation. And this trust of your soul in him, this resting upon him, brings rest in your soul. There is the peace of God and the joy of salvation in it.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

A Will to Believe (530).

I had a young man in my congregation who believed that he was refusing and rejecting salvation because of some unsolved problems. One day he determined to accept Christ as a Saviour, and afterward settle his intellectual difficulties. But, so soon as he had made this decision, he found that his doubt had vanished. He thought that his blindness was intellectual, but his heart turned Godward, the veil was done away. And many a soul has had a like experience. A will to believe clears the mental vision. We see clearly when we are ready to see.—Dr. A. T. Pierson.

A Sublime Faith (531).

Visiting a dying Christian woman, Dr. John Brown said to her, "What would you say, Janet, if after God has done so much for you, he should let you drop into hell?" She calmly replied, "E'en as he likes; but he'll lose mair than I will."

Baxter's Faith in Christ's Promise (532).

The saintly Richard Baxter it was who said that he had a better ground of assurance for the extension of the divine mercy to himself personally in the use of the word "whosoever"

than if the name Richard Baxter were used. For were it said that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that Richard Baxter believing in him should not perish but have everlasting life," what assurance, said he, could he have that he was the person meant. It might be some other one of the many Richard Baxters in the world for whom it was intended. And thus his peace would have no guaranteed stability. But when God says "whosoever," I know I am one of them and that the glad tidings are for me without any peradventure.—Campbell.

Prepared (533).

Make us to meet what is or is to be
With fervid welcome, knowing it is sent
To serve us in some way full excellent,
Though we discern it all belatedly.

—James Whitcomb Riley.

Faith's Power (534).

The man who accomplishes anything in this world is and must be a man of faith. Strong men, forcible men, virile men, are men of faith. It may be a slow type of faith—faith in self—but it is faith. Beaxendale says, "Weak faith makes weak men." How much stronger should be the man who has faith in God, the faith that says, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthened me." This is the faith of the higher type. Be done with saying what you don't believe, and find in your soul the divinest, truest thing in which you do believe, and work that out. Be the noblest man that your present faith, poor and weak and imperfect as it is, can make you to be. So, and so only, as you take the next step forward, as you stand strong where you are now, so only as you think the curtain will draw back, and there will be revealed to you what lies beyond.

Spiritually Discerned (535).

The soul has its eyes. It sees those things that are invisible to the eyes of flesh. "They are spiritually discerned." "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Faith's visions are real. Reality does not demand material substance. Love is real, but no one can see it. Hope is real, though one may not weigh it or divide it out. Courage is real, though one can not buy it or barter it in the market. And there is an inward eye, some kind of a spiritual organ of vision, that sees those realities

and reports them as genuine and substantial. This soul vision may be affected somewhat as body vision. It requires the clear sunshine of God's favor and presence, and the radiant atmosphere of faith. It is dimmed by sin and disbelief.

How Faith is Evidenced (536).

Faith is evidenced by our obedience and our love; for these three are but different sides of the same prism, each helping the other, each transmutable into the other. It is shown by our cheerfulness, our freedom from fear and anxiety. He who walks by faith takes no strolls through the land of fretfulness. Disappointment is destroyed. Sorrow is turned into joy. Affliction is welcomed because of the love which sends it and the spiritual gain which attends it. It is a proof of growing faith when we can put and keep the world, our particular world (for each one has his own), completely under foot.—The Riches of His Grace.

His Faith (537).

A short time ago, at a convention, a working man rose to give a testimony. He said that he was the son of a Dorset laborer, that twenty years ago he came to Lancashire to work in the mill, that he was converted in the church where we met, and that ever since he had been a worker in the church. But last year he was stricken with an illness, and his spiritual joy left him. The depression was almost unbearable, and one morning he started out for the moors. It was a beautiful May day, and the air was filled with the singing of the birds and the heather was lit up with sunshine. The impulse to pray came upon him, and for an hour—to use his own words—"For an hour upon my knees I held a conversation. Suddenly I was wonderfully conscious of the divine presence. Christ spoke to me. He showed me the print of the nails and the wounded side, and my heart exclaimed, 'My Lord and my God.' Then he said, 'Account for it as you may, but there streamed in upon me a heavenly joy which I had never known before, and which has never left me. It fills me with song. It transfigures my work. It gives me power." Such was his testimony.

The Truth that Saves (538).

There are faiths and faiths, each with their appropriate objects and results. But there is only one which brings to you, as a needy sinner, the gift of God, which is eternal life, through Jesus Christ your Lord.

SERVICE XXXVI.

The Privilege of Prayer.

John 14: 14.

"If ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it."

Lesson:—John 16: 23-29.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **The persons addressed** "Ye." Christ's followers.
2. **The scope of the promise.** "Ask anything."
3. **The condition.** "In my name."
4. **The pledge.** "I will do it."

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Communion. (539)—Waiting on God implies taking time to commune with him and keeping the ear of the heart open to hear him only speak. Jesus invites us to retire with him into the desert place to rest awhile. Every day we should have a little trysting time with our Beloved. Then could we say with the disciple who was wont to lean upon the bosom of his Lord: "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." As some one has beautifully said, the mind wants steadying and setting right many times a day. It resembles a compass placed on a rickety table; the least stir of the table makes the needle swing around and point untrue. Let it settle, then, till it points aright. Be perfectly silent for a few moments, thinking of Jesus, there is almost divine force in silence. Drop the thing which worries, which excites, which thwarts you; let it fall like a sediment to the bottom, until the soul is no longer turbid, and you find that nearness to God is gained and cultivated in being alone with God.

Give and Work and Pray. (540)—If the Christian Church could only come to feel that the best we can give in anything we are called to do or to suffer is prayer, we fancy that a great and profitable lesson would be learned.

All we are expected to give besides prayer in any work or suffering, are money and effort. But these are not worthy of comparison with prayer. Prayer rises superior to these on several accounts. The poorest and weakest can give prayer. Then prayer has brought such great blessings that are within our own knowledge. Men have in their own experiences instances in

which prayer has brought benefits far beyond anything money or our own efforts have brought us.

There is a great power in money, and we do not depreciate it even in the Lord's work. The effort that has been put forth by the truly good man has been of great use in the kingdom of God.

We do not depreciate either the gift of money or the gift of effort, but how much more powerful they become when prompted by prayer and when blessed in answer to prayer! How little can they do without prayer! It is prayer that prompts the gift of money in thousands of instances. It is the answer of prayer that makes money and effort useful in the Redeemer's kingdom.

Now, if we, as the people of God, felt as we should, that prayer is the best we can give, it would be first in all Christian work. It would continue as our work proceeded, and it would follow our work.

Nor would it hinder our gifts or decrease our efforts. Indeed, it would prompt our gifts and increase our efforts. Let us, therefore, put the proper estimate upon money, effort and prayer, and feel that there is nothing better that we can give than prayer. If we want help for the congregation, or for the individual, or for ourselves, let us feel that the best we can give to secure it is prayer.—Presbyterian Journal.

Mid-day Refreshment. (541)—Stop in the midst of the bustle and hurry and temptation of the day for thanksgiving and prayer. A few minutes spent alone with God at midday will go far to keep you calm in the midst of the worries and anxieties of modern life.—R. A. Torrey.

Breath and Prayer. (542)—It is an old question, but it may be well to answer it again. We might question in return, "What good does it do to breathe?" The answer is, our bodies would be dead if we did not breathe. And so the answer to the first question is, our spiritual natures would be dead if we did not pray; so that it is good for us to pray because it means life to the best part of our being.

We must correct again the old idea of prayer. It is not asking God for something—that is only a part of prayer. But it is communion, companionship, fellowship with God.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air,

sings Montgomery, and truly. Jesus tells us to pray because he would have us live. And to assure us of the reality of this life he tells us that our desires will be gratified. "Seek and ye shall find." God gives us all that we ask for, and in the best way. He does not give us a little thing when he wishes to give us a big thing; he does measure the answer by the size of the request. But he goes down beneath the request and finds the real need, of which we, perchance, are scarcely conscious, and he answers that need.

There are three great results which invariably follow prayer. First, God hears and answers. Second, we are drawn nearer to him and made a part of his great working. Third, there comes a peace to the heart and life, because we feel the sureness of God's love and power. True prayer always brings these results —Floyd W. Tomkins, in Beacons on Life's Voyage.

Petition and Communion. (543)—Prayer is more than asking; in its wider sense it is really communion with God, and is the perfectly natural act of every Christian. Suppose a child has no request to make of his father, does he, therefore, refrain from talking with them? Surely not. And if it were possible that we had no requests to make of God, we would still love to talk with him. The communion is the essential point; the requests are incidental to that communion. The Christian talks to God, and loves to do so; and when there is this real vital communion, prayer takes on a different phase. It is filled with living topics—the joys and sorrows, the deep purposes and intense feelings; in fact, the whole of the intensely real human life, if breathed into the ear of the infinite Father. Does he give me what I want? Yes, often. Does he withhold what I have asked? Yes, sometimes, and yet it is better so. The Christian prays as he breathes—because it is natural, and he cannot quit and live. So that, after all, it is but a useless and foolish thing to ask, "Why should we pray?" If we be Christians, we cannot choose but pray.

But will God answer prayer? Why not? To God there is no law. The laws which hold our world and us in unrelaxing grip, and slacken not their hold for atom or for world, are but expressions of his will. They bind us; yes, with bonds which may not be broken; but they reach not him who made them. It is not a question of faith or reason alone, but of fact. God has

answered prayer; God does answer prayer; and we cannot doubt that God will answer prayer.—The Christian Guardian.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Prayer is the Wish of the Heart (544).

A story is told of a little shepherd boy who was obliged to keep watch over the sheep, and so could not go to church. But in his heart there grew up a longing to pray to God, as they were doing in church. He had, however, never been taught any prayer, and so, kneeling down, he began with closed eyes and folded hands, saying the alphabet, "A, B, C, D," and on to the end.

"What are you doing, my little man?" said a gentleman passing by.

"Please, sir, I was praying," replied the boy.

"But why are you saying your letters?"

"Why," said the little fellow, "I didin't know any prayer, only I felt I wanted God to take care of me and help me to take care of my sheep. So I thought if I said all I knew he would put it together and spell all I wanted."

"Bless your heart, my little man! He will! When the heart speaks right, the lips can't say wrong," said the gentleman.—The Christian.

Old Man's Prayer (545).

In one of our city hospitals recently, the physicians were getting ready to perform an operation. The patient, an old man, was stretched upon the operating table, and when, at length, all was in readiness, one of the physicians approached with the choloroform. The old man raised his head and said:

"Wait a moment." Then, folding his hands and closing his eyes, he began repeating the prayer which he used to say at his mother's knee:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray thee, Lord, my soul to take,
And this I ask for Jesus' sake."

The doctors bowed their heads reverently and waited; and when he had finished he looked up calmly, and said: "I am ready."

The Christian Who Never Prays (546).

A tree without roots, and a Christian who never prays in

secret, are fitting types of each other. Prayer is the most wonderful fact in the universe. It is the highest and supremest privilege of a human being. As our view of the Almighty is enlarged by new discoveries of the marvels of physical science, this privilege of vital relation between our helplessness and his might should become more and more dear to us. In ourselves we are infinitely little, but as we take hold upon God, infinite love and strength and joy are ours though believing prayer.

Praying Always (547).

How we may pray always is thus beautifully illustrated: "There is on our coast a fountain within high-water mark on the seashore. Twice a day the tide spreads over it, and the pure, sweet water is defiled by the salt, bitter wave. But the tide goes down, and the fountain washes itself clear from the defilement. As that troubled sea goes down, once more the fountain gushes pure and sweet beneath the pure sweet heavens. This is the emblem of a life that is in daily conflict with the world and with adverse circumstances. Again and again he is overpowered by those perplexed circumstances and tumultuous voices; but these all subside, and the soul is left alone with God."

Answered Prayer (548).

In consequence of a failure in the mackerel season in 1848, the fishing village of N., in a nook of Mount's Bay, was in sore straits. Starvation threatened. One morning a devout fisherman made their plight the subject of special prayer. That night he and his sons concluded to try for a catch. He said:

The night was calm and still, not a ripple ruffled the water, and the broad moon brightened the whole scene. We were all alone, far out at sea, and yet not alone, because the Father was with us. Raising our voices—and we were good singers in those days—we sang the hymn,

"Jesus, at thy command
I launch into the deep."

After singing we prayed, and then the same blessed influence that had been felt in the morning came again, so that we were all subdued, and the big tears fell like rain; but they were tears of joy, for we felt that God was about to work for us. We now heaved up the pilchard net, but had only taken about two hundred in it. We however shot again, hoping to do better, for my faith in God was firm; and then I went under deck to lie down for a

while. But my father soon said, "I would not leave the nets out too long, my children, for if they are northern coasters, they will be in such large numbers that the nets will go aground, and then we can't haul them in." We therefore set to work at once, and with the nine nets we carried, we hauled in, to our great joy, twenty-two thousand pilchards.

And now, having taken another thousand and a half, the wind began to freshen, and we prepared to go ashore. We went in with our light up, and with thankful hearts, and as we came near to the quay, about four o'clock in the morning, some men in a cock-boat, who were going to look after the seine, called to us, asking what we had done. We told them, and at once one of their number said, "That is a lie"; but the old man in the bow said, "If you won't believe, let us go and see"; and so they did, and were surprised beyond measure. The glad news spread through the village like wildfire, and the people flocked down to the beach, saw, believed, and wondered.

All the boats put to sea the following night, but there were no fish; and not a thousand were taken for the rest of the season, while the eleven hogsheads taken by the Brenton on that never-to-be-forgotten night fetched £36.

"When I came ashore," said Richard, "I could not speak; my heart was too full. I had to pass my mother's door to get to my house, and she stood upon the threshold waiting for me. Gratitude had struck me dumb, but she said,

"'Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.'"

Watching With Him (549).

The dalesmen used to make merry with the poet Wordsworth when they saw him sitting hour by hour on some grey stone. Some of them thought he was an idle rascal, more of them thought he was a little crazed. But Wordsworth was watching nature like a lover—he was wisely passive that he might catch her voice; he waited on nature with a splendid faithfulness, and we are debtors to his waiting till this hour.

Now, as it is with nature and with art, so, very truly, is it with the Lord. It is only by waiting that we come to know him, and it is only when we know him we are strong. No self-respecting man reveals his deepest to the chance visitor or to the casual comer. He keeps his deepest for those who love his company—for those who are glad to be with him every day.

SERVICE XXXVII.

The Home Prepared.

John 14: 1-4.

"In my Father's house are many mansions."

Lesson:—Revelation 21: 1-7.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **We are pilgrims** on a journey.
2. But we are **going home.**
3. There is special **preparation for our coming.**
4. The anticipation of heaven should
   (1) Keep us **steadfast** in trial.
   (2) Fill us with **gladness** in adversity.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Universal Language. (550)—Do you understand and speak the language of the heavenly world? You could hardly be happy if you could not communicate with those about you here on the earth, and equally so would it be in heaven. The language of heaven is only taught by the Holy Spirit, and only those so taught can understand it. This language is foolishness, without meaning, and unintelligible to all those who do not belong to the heavenly world. This is evident all around us here, and every day. Those who have not been instructed by the Holy Spirit constantly accuse Christians of talking nonsense, and when Jesus was on earth they said he talked like a lunatic (having a devil), and, "why do you listen to him"; they charged him with blasphemy because he said he was the Son of God In the same way to-day those who are not heavenly feel and say. How does the talk, the expressions of hope, joy and purpose uttered by the most earnest Christians, sound to you? Can you, do you speak the same language as they, and enter into their joys? If you do not possess these essential qualifications for the heavenly life, why should you think you would be happy in heaven?—Joseph H. Bradley, D.D., in The Christian Work.

Heaven Bye and Bye. (551)—A great many people, and even some Christian people, would, I imagine, confess that they are little affected by the thought of heaven. They do not disbelieve in it by any means, but it does not lay hold of them.

In comparison with this solid world, on which our homes are built and in which our business lies, it is a land of shadows or a city in the clouds; and, although they know that they ought to desire to go there, in reality they would prefer, if it were possible, to stay here.—Stalker.

Speculation. (552)—You wonder what heaven is like, and its service and joys; and what the other place is; and what the promise means that death and hell shall be vanquished, and all things at last put under His feet. And I tell you simply, candidly, and reverently, that I know nothing about these things, and he who thinks he knows, only deceives himself and others. He is attempting to break through the door which God keeps closed, and I do not think that can be a profitable business. And I do not even wish to know these things now. God will tell us his secrets when it is good for us to know them, and it is only wearing out our brains, and frittering our energies away purposelessly, to attempt to discover them before his time comes.—Rev. J. G. Greenbough.

Pictures of the Home-Land. (553)—If a child in a famine orphanage of the Far East were told he must shortly visit one of the countries of Europe, he would perhaps be filled with distress. His mind has often been torn asunder by contending thoughts. He has been told that the men of the white races are ogres without natural affection, whose countries are terrible to dwell in because of the mighty machines they use. At the same time he has been told by others that white men are gentle, often giving of their substance to feed the destitute of alien races. But his instructor takes him aside and shows him pictures of the dreadful land. The aged are honoured, a household is filled with smiling children, and festivals of rejoicing are held to celebrate the deliverance of other races from slavery, bloodshed, and terrorism. He is also told that for years his needs have been provided for by friends familiar with his name, who have heard of his progress in virtue and knowledge. His terror soon passes away. And have we not some such feeling when the great Interpreter draws aside for a moment the veil which hides the unseen, and shows us pictures of angels who have ministered to us, and who rejoice when we turn from our foulness and bow at the feet of an offended God?—Rev. J. G. Selby.

Last Words. (554)—Socrates is variously credited with two "last sayings," the stately "It is now time that we depart—

I to die, you to live; but which is the better destination is unknown," and the less impressive but commendably honest instruction to his servant: "Crito, I owe a cock to Aesculapius. Will you remember to pay the debt?"

(555)—"This is the toilet of death," said Charlotte Corday, slayer of Marat, "arranged by somewhat rude hands, but it leads to immortality." "Is not this dying with courage and true greatness?" eagerly inquired Caroline Ferdinande Louise, Madame de Berri.

(556)—"My beautiful flowers, my lovely flowers!" joyed Jean Paul Richter. "Deep dreams of peace," smiled Leigh Hunt. "Many things are growing plain and clear to my understanding," acknowledged Friedrich Schiller. "Lord, help my soul!" importuned poor, unhappy Poe. "I leave this world without a regret," was Thoreau's last statement. "Give my love to the world"; so the "good gray poet" Whittier is said to have framed his good-by.

(557)—"My dear one, with whom I have lived so long, make room for me, for this is my grave, and in death we shall not be divided," said Severus, early bishop of Ravenna, speaking to his beloved wife, and recalling that ancient Spanish monarch who wished to be buried with his feet at the foot of his dead bride's resting place, "so that on the resurrection morning her dear face shall I see first of all."

"In the name of modesty," begged Madame Elizabeth, sister of Louis XVI, when the executioner rudely unclasped the veil draping her neck and shoulders, "cover my bosom."—Colson.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Home Prepared (558).

Journeying the other day from Boston to Denver, I noticed in the car two boys. They were talking together; and I heard one of them ask the other, "Where are you going?" "O—out West!" was the answer. And I was sure that the boy had no idea where "out West" was; whether it was a large place or a small place, or how he was going to get to it.

But he evidently wasn't troubling himself about it! And I didn't wonder, when I heard him tell the rest of the story. His father had been "out West," wherever that was, and had been making there a new home for the family. And now he had gone back to Massachusetts, where they had been living, and was taking the family with him to the new home "out West." There

he sat, in the next seat to the boy, with his family about him. He looked as though he could take good care of them all. So the boy had nothing to fear or to worry about. He was just giving himself up to the pleasures of the journey; leaving his father to attend to all the business of it. He was wise, wasn't he? And how perfectly foolish he would have been to fret and fear just because he didn't even know where "out West" was, much less how to get there. His father knew; that was enough. His father had already prepared the new home, and now he was bringing them all to be with him there.

The other boy asked him once, "But where is the place?" And he simply said, "O, I don't know; papa's got a house out there for us."

It made me think of a beautiful text: the words of Jesus to his disciples. It is in the fourteenth chapter of the gospel of John. Hear it! "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself: that where I am there ye may be also." Jesus has gone to prepare a new home for his children.—A Pastor's Talks to His Chrildren.

Building Our Heaven (559).

"We build our heaven as we go along," said a dear old lady one day. "I once had friends who were traveling abroad for several years. They intended to build a home on their return, and the dream of a home that was to be went with them in all their journeying. When they could secure a beautiful picture, statue, or vase, they purchased it, and sent it home to await their coming. Rare and curious treasures, which would afterward be linked with happy memories, they forwarded for their future enjoyment. I love to think that we are doing the same for our heavenly home in these pilgrimage days on earth. The kindly deed that made a rare picture in somebody's life, the little sacrifice that blossomed into joy, the helpful friendship,—all these we shall find again; and the patience we have gained, the 'song in the night' which we have learned—whatever of beauty, tenderness, faith, or love we can put into other lives or our own—will be among our treasures in heaven."—Forward.

Melodies from Home (560).

The melody of evening bells has been heard under rare circumstances, it is said, a hundred miles at sea by those who put

their ears in the focus of the mainsail, which gathered and condensed the sound. So, in some supreme moment, under specially favorable circumstances, the Christian voyager toward Heaven seems to hear the ringing of heavenly bells wafted from his home within the vale.

Victor Hugo on Immortality (561).

"I feel in myself the future life. I am rising, I know, toward the sky. The sunshine is over my head. Heaven lights up with the reflection of unknown worlds."

"You say the soul is nothing but the result of bodily powers; why, then, is my soul the more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head and eternal spring is in my heart."

"The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvelous, yet simple. It is a fairy tale, and it is history. For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose, verse, history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode, song—I have tried all. But I feel that I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down into the grave, I can say, like so many others, 'I have finished my day's work,' but I can not say, 'I have finished my life.' My day's work will begin the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley, it is a thoroughfare. It closes in the twilight to open with the dawn. I improve every hour because I love this world as my fatherland. My work is only beginning. My work is hardly above its foundation. I would be glad to see it mounting forever. The thirst for the infinite proves infinity."

The Vision of Heaven (562).

St. Chrysostom is said to have had a vision in which he saw the altar rails crowded with angels listening to the sermon. And if we could always preach with heaven open, and God and angels looking down, how we would preach! Then the minister would have little time for essay reading, and for Sunday evening lectures on art and travel, but, as the messenger of God, and a master workman in the kingdom of grace, he would make his pulpit a great center of spiritual power and victory.—The Master Workman.

"A Prepared Place for a Prepared People" (563).

A father of the church, meeting a bright and brilliant boy, asked him what he was going to do. "I am going to college to prepare for the work of life," he answered. And what was he going to do then? "Then I am going into a bank to learn business before going into partnership with my father." And what then? "Then I am going to become my father's partner and be a rich man." And what then? "Then I am going to marry and have a home of my own." And what then? "Why, I suppose my father will die sometime, and I shall be the head of the house." Well, what then? "When I have amassed a large enough fortune, I am going to retire and spend a happy old age in a country mansion." And what then? "Oh!" he said, dropping his voice, "I suppose I must die myself at last." Yes, and what then? But the young man was silent.

My hearers, what then? There are many mansions in the Father's house; but is there one for you? How can I tell it? you may ask. We can tell it in this way: Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people; if Christ is preparing a place for you there, then he will be preparing you for the place. Have you believed in him? Do you love him? Are you becoming like him?—Stalker.

Long Plans for Eternity (564).

If a young man were heir to the throne of England, would he not be foolish if he spent all his time learning how to play tennis? Yet we who are heirs to all eternity spend our time in interests that are as transient. Character is the only thing we can take into eternity—character and memory. Our plans are adequate for eternity only as they concern character and memory. It is easy to live for the day and forget tomorrow—the endless tomorrow. Earthly pleasures and tasks are engrossing, but it is the height of folly to be engrossed by them. The practical man is he alone who arranges his life so that it will count the most for his eternity.—Amos R. Wells.

SERVICE XXXVIII.

Abiding in Christ.

John 15:4.

"Abide in me and I in you."

Lesson:—John 15:1-11.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. The essence of religion is the **believer's personal union in the Christ.**

2. **Illustrations:** (1) The vine and members, (2) Members of the body, (3) Parts of a building.

3. **Method:** (1) **Faith,** (2) Loving **Fellowship,** (3) **Service.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Heart's Desire. (565)—It looks as if God were near us, and yet not near enough to be our intimate Friend; as though Christ, for all his love, were not inside, as perhaps once he was, touching and sustaining the soul. There is something we can hardly explain. It is not exactly doubt or sin, yet our relations with God are not face to face, hearty and free and loving. As a rule, the failure lies in desire. Let us question ourselves. Do we dread life apart from him? Would it make much practical difference to us if we heard that Jesus had never risen? Have we not failed recently to urge God? Have we ever prayed with all our heart and soul for God's presence? Have we let him see that our love for him is something far deeper than words or forms, and that we are not satisfied with an outward appearance of religion, or with such dim aspirations and vague thoughts as his providence may stir in us from time to time? If not, how can God be at home with us?—James Moffatt, D. D.

God of the Unafraid (566).

I have walked on the Mount of Gladness, I have wept in the Vale
of Tears,
And my feet have stumbled ofttimes as I trod through the path
of the years;
Yet my heart has ever lifted its song of thankful praise
To the God of all eternity, who has kept me in my ways.
Though alone I tread the wine press, or kneel in Gethsemane,

I know he has never forsaken, and that he leadeth me.
Though I "walk through the Valley of Shadow," my soul shall not be dismayed,
For my God is the God of the fathers, the God of the unafraid!
—Unknown.

Love the Panacea. (567)—There is no soul so dull as not to know the value of love or as not to see it here. When all else fails to impress us, when life ceases either to inspire us with hope or fear, when our heart is shut to warning, to hope, to remonstrance, to reasoning, the remembrance of Christ bleeding, suffering, agonizing, dying for us finds the heart and makes us human again. If you have strength for nothing else, you can fall at the foot of the cross; if your faith is limited and feeble, you can yet believe in the death of Christ, in the love that prompted it, in the redemption it aimed at. Empty your mind of other thoughts that it may be filled with the remembrance of Christ. Make room in your heart for his dying love, and let that love possess your spirit. Do not seek in the first place to pray for pardon, or to secure peace with God, or to be delivered from sorrow, or to seek great things for yourself; but seek to remember Christ, to let your mind settle upon his pure compassion, his untold anguish, and in your heart to say, "He loved me, and gave himself for me."—Marcus Dods, D. D.

Love, the Countersign. (568)—No man is a Christian who does not love the Lord Jesus. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema" (1 Cor. 16:22). This is the touchstone of trial for each one of us; not what we profess or say, but whether we love, and how much. But let us remember that love reveals itself differently according to that aspect of Christ's person or work on which the Spirit has fixed the beholder's eye. In some, conscious of a great deliverance, it takes the form of gratitude. In others, smitten with the beauty of his character, of complacency. In others, again, pre-occupied with his claims, of reverential devotion to his service. The symptoms of its presence are manifold. Sometimes adoring silence; at others irrepressible tears; or the sudden burning of the cheek; or unostentatious acts of mercy; or steadfastness in confessing him at all costs. Love betrays itself, whether it fetches water from the well of Bethlehem at peril of life, or comes with precious spikenard to anoint the dear body of the dead.—Rev. F. B. Meyer.

Christ the Bread. (569)—Only one can satisfy—Jesus, who said: "I am the bread of life." Christ is the soul's bread. Simon Peter said: "Lord, to whom shall we go?" These words are ringing down through the ages, and should deeply impress on our hearts the thought that Christ alone can satisfy the longings of the immortal nature of man.

Are you hungry? Are you in a weary land? Listen to him who bids all to come and obtain their share of the bread of life, which he gives so freely. This bread of life will fully satisfy the hunger of the human heart. Whether one dwells in a palace or in a tenement home, the human soul cries out after a satisfying portion. Jesus came to make it possible for all to partake of this bread of the soul. And Christians can help to give the joy and peace which they enjoy to others. Often only a word will save a soul.—Grace A. Johnson, in Pittsburgh Christian Advocate.

Companions (570).

The day is long, and the day is hard;
We are tired of the march and of keeping guard,
Tired of the sense of a fight to be won,
Of days to live through and of work to be done,
Tired of ourselves and of being alone.

And all the while, did we only see,
We walk in the Lord's own company:
We fight, but 'tis he who nerves our arm,
He turns the arrows which else might harm,
And out of the storm he brings a calm.

—Susan Coolidge.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

A Present Christ (571).

The story of the three Babylonish youths is ever being repeated. They were true to principle: "Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods"; and the form of the king's visage was changed against them. The furnace was heated "seven times more than it was wont to be heated," and the faithful youths were cast into the midst of it; but the fire would not kindle upon them. In the midst of it they walked unscathed—in their coats, their hosen, and their hats. Then the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and cried, "Did ye not

cast three men into the midst of the fire? Lo, there are four, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." Nay, the fourth was the Son of God; the same whose promise is sure for ever: "Lo, I am with you alway; I will not leave you alone, I will come to you." If we yield to temptation it is because we refuse his help. For he is not far from every one of us.—David James Burrell.

Fellowship With a Person (572).

Our religion centers in a Human person. I can never forget when this conception came to me with the most unique power. Of course I had thought of it before, and had much preached it before; but at this moment it came upon me with a whelming emphasis. The last afternoon I was to be in Jerusalem I went to the top of the Mount of Olives that I might get a comprehending view which should abide in memory. What a view it was, and how often now, shutting my eyes, I seem again to see it. To the West, and farthest off, the city of Jerusalemö; near the base of the hill, Gethsemane; near the summit and a little to the East, Bethany. Turning completely to the East, and far yonder, the steely gleam of the Dead Sea; the flash of the Jordan as it emptied into it. And He made it all so sacred. He saw that city. He toiled up those winding paths. He had looked far toward the Jordan. He saw it all with human eyes, as I was seeing it. And this feeling of his share with me in my humanity, and of my share with him in his, came to me with a realness and vividness overpowering. This is the fact—our religion centers in a human person; that is one of its main meanings.—Wayland Hoyt, D. D.

Loving the Unseen One (573).

There once lived a lady who had been disappointed in love in her younger days and who carried on her bosom a gold locket which was supposed to contain the picture of her faithless lover. She died at a somewhat advanced age. But when she lay in her coffin a friend opened the locket and in it was the face of Jesus and inscribed on the inside of the case were the words, "whom not having seen I love." That had been the secret of her life of patient resignation to God's will for many long years.

Abiding in Christ (574).

One afternon, in an inland city in China, feeling almost in spiritual despair, I was reading the sixth chapter of St. John and

came across a verse which struck me as it had never done before. "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him." Reading it in the original my mind was carried on by the verb from the sixth to the fifteenth chapter and I saw at once—why! here is a little light on this great and difficult problem. I have evidently been making a mistake about this subject of "abiding in Christ."

I had thought that abiding in Christ meant keeping our hearts so fixed upon Christ, so constantly meditating upon him and dwelling in him, that we never lose the consciousness of his presence. Now, what I thought was abiding I have since seen was feeding upon Christ. Feeding is a voluntary act. We go to the table and sit down and partake of what is there. That is a voluntary act. But the man who wanted to feed all day, and wanted to feed all the night, too, wouldn't be a desirable member of any community. That was what I was trying to do, and because I couldn't manage it, I would get into a sort of almost religious dyspepsia.

I had a little hospital and dispensary work that kept me busy. Perhaps a man would be brought into the place with an artery cut and in imminent danger; within half an hour the question whether he would live or die would be settled, and one's whole attention would be wrapped up in the patient, and one wouldn't think of anything else until the result was known; and then the thought would steal over me, "Why, for two hours I haven't thought about Jesus"—and I would go off into my closet almost in despair and confess this sin. I was in great distress, indeed. I wanted to be feeding at the table all the time. Now, if a man has two or three square meals every day, and perhaps a lunch or two between, he ought to be able to go to work!

Abiding in Jesus isn't fixing our attention on Christ, but it is being one with him. And it doesn't make any difference what we are doing, or whether we are asleep or awake. A man is abiding just as much when he is sleeping for Jesus, as when he is awake and working for Jesus. Oh, it is a very sweet thing to have one's mind just resting there!"—Rev. J. Hudson Taylor.

SERVICE XXXIX.

The Cure Of Care.

Matthew 6: 34.

"Be not therefore anxious for the morrow."

Lesson:—Matthew 6: 25-34.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Anxiety is wrong.** Christ forbids it.
2. **Anxiety is unreasonable.** God has made full provision for us.
3. **Anxiety is debilitating.** It saps vigor, (1) physical, (2) mental, (3) spiritual.
4. **Cast all your cares on him** for he careth for you.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Price of Peace. (575)—"Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God." This is Christ's cure for fretfulness. He offers for healing the balm of trust in a father's care and watchful interest.

If today you have money enough to purchase present necessities, Faith says, fret not thyself in fear that you will fetch up at the almshouse. If today your children gather about your hearth, Faith says, enjoy the music of their happy voices; gather confidence from their unquestioning trust; train them for God and trust them to his care without tormenting your soul with the fear that death might bear them from you, or if they live that some dire calamity may ruin their lives. If today you are in the enjoyment of health and rejoice in strength "As a strong man to run a race," Faith says, let not your heart be troubled with fear of possible ills. To worry and to fret is but to hasten evil.—Northwestern Advocate.

Cloudy Days. (576)—There is no journey of life but has its cloudy days; and there are some days in which our eyes are so blinded with tears that we find it hard to see our way or even read God's promises. Those days that have a bright sunrise followed by sudden thunder-claps and bursts of unlooked-for sorrows are the ones that test certain of our graces the most severely. Yet the law of spiritual eyesight very closely resembles the law of physical optics. When we come suddenly out of the daylight into a room even moderately darkened, we can discern

nothing; but the pupil of our eye gradually enlarges until unseen objects become visible. Even so the pupil of the eye of faith has the blessed faculty of enlarging in dark hours of bereavement, so that we discover that our loving Father's hand is holding the cup of trial, and by and by the gloom becomes luminous with glory.

The fourteenth chapter of John never falls with such music upon our ears as when we catch its sweet strains amid the pauses of some terrific storm. "Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. . . . I will not leave you comfortless."—Theodore L. Cuyler.

Our Daily Bread. (577)—A gentleman saw two children before him in the cars, a boy and a girl. Both looked tired. They were traveling alone. Toward noon the little girl got up from her seat, and presently he saw her kneeling on the floor, with her head bowed in the cushion. Was she sick? Did she find this an easy way to sleep? No, she was praying.

"What are you doing, my little girl?" he asked, when she got up.

"I was saying, 'Our Father, who art in heaven,'" she said.

"And what are you saying it for now?" he asked again.

"I'm so hungry," she said. ?

"We've been traveling two days," said the boy, "and our luncheon is all gone."

The gentleman wished he had something in his pocket, but it was empty. At the next stopping place he went out himself and bought something for the children to eat.

When he handed it to the child, "I knew it would come," she said, looking up with a blush of joy upon her face. "Did God send you, sir?"

Yes, God sent the gentleman. The child did not see how the cars were to furnish the "daily bread," going so fast, and no pantry. But the Son of God taught her to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread"; and the little girl believed it. She asked him and God well knows ever so many ways to answer our prayers. You see, he let a kind gentleman bring her some.

There is a small word in the Bible of which some people ask, "What does it mean?" The word is faith. What is faith?

It is asking God, believing and trusting him. That is what the little girl did; and it is the kind of asking which God loves, and loves to answer.

Sufficient. (578)—When a man puts a meter on his water pipe, he is careful to turn on only a small stream of water and to shut it off before dark. But when God makes a fountain he turns a Niagara over its great, beetling cliffs and lets it pour for unnumbered centuries.

When the good Lord fed the hungry people in the wilderness, there was more left over than they had to start with. When Paul went to him, asking to be relieved from his "thorn in the flesh," his answer was: "My grace is sufficient for thee." We eat of his manna by day, and then we pillow our heads upon his tender mercies at night and waken to his renewed blessings in the morning.

That nation is poor and that family is poor that raises only enough corn and wheat for its own use. God himself would be poor if, when I asked him for something, he gave me only just what I asked for. I never had a prayer answered in that way in my life. He gives me more than I ask or can ever think of.

God's beautiful pastures are always green when everything is bare and brown.

We have only to lift our faces and ask for our daily bread, and, lo! all the world is his granary. And the bountiful God is bending over us, and all the fields of the world and all the storehouses of heaven are emptied to feed his hungry children.—Robert J. Burdette.

The Eye of a Victor. (579)—When we think of peace we strike a deeper note than when we think of joy. The latter may be described as the sparkle on the wave or the flower on the stem. The former is rather of the spirit and the inner life than of the outward expression. We have been told that far down beneath the ocean, no matter how great the agitation of the billows in wind and storm, there is a strang quietness. This tranquility may exist in the heart underneath surface agitation and distressing experience. One may be in great sorrow and even in agony of soul, and yet have the peace that passeth all understanding, serene and unabated; the sorrow not disturbing the peace, and the peace not lessened by the sorrow. Which of us who has ever undergone a period of suspense, anxiety, and dread because the death angel was hovering over a home, or because there seemed hanging over us a tragedy of which perhaps we could not speak, has not felt the calming touch of the

Saviour's peace? "My peace I give unto you," he said, "not as the world giveth give I unto you."

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Unseen Power (580).

Lieutenant Shackleton, the south polar explorer, is not only a man of great intrepidity, but also of piety. Speaking of the dangers of his voyage, he says:

"It was during these periods that we learned that some Power beyond our own guided our footsteps. If we acknowledged this—as we did—down among the ice, it is only fitting that we should remember it now, when the same Power has brought us safely home through all these troubles and dangers. No one who has seen and experienced what we have down there can take credit to himself for our escape from what appeared to be overwhelming difficulties.

"Let me recall an instance of this which occurred to the northern party. They had arrived at the seacoast, and were one hundred and eighty miles distant from winter quarters. Their retreat was cut off, the sea ice having broken away, when, in the most dramatic fashion, and with a piece of what some people may call luck, but which we attributed to a higher influence, our ship appeared in the nick of time and rescued them. It is true that I had given orders for the Nimrod to look out for them, and Captain Evans had most carefully carried out his instructions, but it was the providential arrival of the ship practically simultaneously with the arrival of the party that ensured their safety.

"Our expedition from start to finish was filled with incidents such as these, and we could not fail to realize that some agency other than human was responsible for what is often attributed to good luck."—The Christian Endeavor World.

God's Holding Hand (581).

It makes a good deal of difference whether you take hold of God or God takes hold of you. Said a father: "My little girl today refused to let me take hold of her hand when we were walking together. She thought she could go alone. But when we came to a place which was slippery, she took hold, first of my little finger, and then, as it grew more icy, of my whole hand. As we went on and it was growing worse, she let go entirely, and said: 'Papa, take hold of me.' She knew I was strong and that she could not fall unless I fell. Now," said he, "I have been

slipping, slipping for the last eleven years, and the reason is that I have not put my hand into the hand of God. I have been trying to take hold of him, but not asking him to take hold of me. As long as he has hold of my hand, I can't fall. He would have to be dethroned first. If our hands are placed in his whose throne is in heaven, we never can fall down into hell."—Dwight L. Moody.

In the Making (582).

"I wonder why God made me," said Mrs. Faber, bitterly. "I'm sure I don't know where was the use of making me."

"Perhaps not much yet," replied Dorothy, "but then he hasn't done with you yet. He is making you now, and you don't like it."

It would give us more patience with ourselves if we always remembered this. We would not get discouraged with our infirmities, imperfections and failures, if we always kept in mind the fact that we are not yet made, that we are only in process of being made, that God is not yet through making us. It would often help us to understand better the reasons for the hard or painful experiences that come to us. God is at work on us, making us. If we yield ourselves to his hand in quietness and confidence, letting him do what he will with us, all will be well. —George Macdonald.

Blessing from Calamity (583).

The more one knows of the most afflicted lives, the more often the conviction flashes across us that the affliction is not a wanton outrage, but a delicately adjusted treatment. I remember that once to a friend of mine was sent a rare plant, which he set in a big flower pot close to a fountain basin. It never throve; it lived, indeed, putting out in the spring a delicate, stunted foliage, though my friend, who was a careful gardener, could never divine what ailed it. He was away for a few weeks, and the day after he was gone, the flower pot was broken by a careless garden boy, who wheeled a barrow roughly past it. The plant, earth and all, fell into the water; the boy removed the broken pieces of the pot, and, seeing that the plant had sunk to the bottom of the little pool, never troubled his head to fish it out. When my friend returned, he noticed one day in the fountain a new and luxuriant growth of some unknown plant. He made careful inquiries, and found out what had happened. It then came out that the plant was in reality a water-plant, and

that it had pined away in the stifling air for want of nourishment, perhaps dimly longing for the fresh bed of the pool. Even so has it been times without number with some starving and thirsty soul that has gone on feebly trying to live a maimed life, shut up in itself, ailing, feeble. There has descended upon it what looks at first sight like a calamity, some affliction unaccountable, and then it proves that this was the one thing needed, that sorrow has brought on some latent unselfishness, or suffering energized on some unused faculty of strength and patience.

Keep Hands Off God's Work (584).

We can make the clock strike before the hour by putting our own hands to it, but it will strike wrong. We can tear the rosebud open before the time when it would naturally open, but we destroy the beauty of the rose. So we spoil many a gift or blessing which God is preparing for us by our own eager haste. He would weave all our lives into patterns of loveliness. He has a perfect plan for each. It is only when we refuse to work according to his plan that we mar the web. Stop meddling with the threads of life as they come from the Lord's hands. Every time you interfere you make a flaw. Keep your hands off and let God weave as he pleases.

Without Carefulness (585).

Master! how shall I bless Thy name
For Thy tender love to me,
For the sweet enablings of Thy grace,
So sovereign, yet so free,
That have taught me to obey Thy word
And cast my care on Thee!

They tell of weary burdens borne
For discipline of life,
Of long anxieties and doubts,
Of struggle and of strife,
Of a path of dim perplexities
With fears and shadows rife.

No anxious thought upon my brow
The watching world should see,
No carefulness, O child of God!
For nothing careful be,
But cast thou all thy care on Him
Who always cares for thee.

SERVICE XL.

Our Sympathizing Saviour.

Hebrews 2:18; 4:15.

"In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

"Touched with a feeling of our infirmities."

Lesson:—Hebrews 2:9-18.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. Christ's followers meet with **afflictions and trials.**
2. The Saviour enters into these experiences with them in **loving sympathy.**
3. How **close** this brings him to us!

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Jesus' Joy. (587)—The need of the world perpetually called to Jesus, and his heart answered in passionate longing, as the woodsman answers to the call of the forest, as the sailor answers to the voices of the sea. If we do not understand this, we will pity him in his toil and deprivation. In truth, what he did was to him a measureless joy. His soul ran out to the service of humanity as the river runs eagerly to the sea. He reached onward, even to the Cross, as the heart of the bridegroom runs out to his bride.—Rev. John T. McFarland, in "Etchings of the Master."

Victory Over Sin. (588)—We have the inexhaustible encouragement that springs from the fact that One who was in all points tempted as we are has not been defeated, but has passed scatheless through all that human life could do to overwhelm Him. There is a way through life to blessedness. It may not be a way easy to find or easy to follow, but there is One who has found it and seeks to guide us to the perfect freedom in which He now lives. He is the strong swimmer who has not only found standing for Himself on the eternal shore, but has also carried a line by which we, too, may escape. He has trodden down for us the drifted snow, so that we can follow Him. Universal defeat has not been, after all, the lot of humanity—sin and death are not the sole experience of those who have passed through life; there is one who has turned all its obstacles into stepping-stones, its hazards into victories, its anxiety and

bitterness and gloom into the glory and brightness of eternity.—Marcus Dods, D. D.

Compassionate. (589)—We may boldly expect mercy from Him who has learned to sympathize. He learned sympathy by being tempted; but it is by being tempted, yet without sin, that he is specially able to show mercy.

There are two who are unfit for showing mercy: he who has never been tried; and he who, having been tempted, has fallen under temptation. The young, untempted, and upright, are often severe judges. They are for sanguinary punishment; they are for expelling offenders from the bosom of society. The old, on the contrary, who have fallen much, are lenient; but it is a leniency which often talks thus: Men must be men; a young man must sow his wild oats, and reform.—F. W. Robertson.

Love for the Sinful. (590)—To Jesus Christ there belonged a goodness so perfect and so positive that it left abundance of room in his heart for sympathy with the sinful. Not that he judged their sin leniently; he could not do so, for he hated sin with the hatred of God himself. And yet he never judged the sinner harshly, since He loved him and pitied him and desired to save him, even while condemning him for what he had done. And it was this wonderful combination in Jesus of a perfect purity with a profound sympathy that helps to explain the secret of his attraction for publicans and sinners.—John C. Lambert, D. D.

Tempted Like As We Are. (591)—It will greatly help us to realize the sympathy of the Saviour and his oneness with us if we can get a clear, strong, settled sense of the Temptation. The Scriptures lay much stress upon the Temptation. "He is able to succour them that are tempted in that wherein he himself suffered temptation" (Heb. 2:18, R. V., marg.). And again it is written—"We have not an High Priest, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin,—then was he in his human nature in all points like as we are. The real human nature of Jesus is a truth that we have feared to grasp in its completeness, yet if we lose that we lose everything. Let us think it out carefully step by step.—Mark Guy Pearse.

Our Shepherd. (592)—Here, then, we have the Shepherd's love and the sheep's recognition, the Shepherd's life and sheep's

obedience, the Shepherd's protection and the sheep's inviolable safety. The springs are his, but the streams are ours. The supplies are his, but the blessings are ours. His the food, but ours the nutrition. His the trouble, but ours the benefit. His the care, but ours the confidence. His the life, but ours the character.

"The King of love my Shepherd is,
His goodness faileth never,
I nothing lack if I am his,
And he is mine for ever."

—Home Messenger.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Christ the Warm Gulf Stream of God's Grace (593).

There is a river in the ocean. In the severest droughts it never fails, and in the mightiest floods it never overflows. Its banks and its bottoms are of cold water, while its current is warm. The gulf of Mexico is its fountain, and its mouth is the Arctic seas. It is the Gulf Stream. There is in the world no other so majestic flow of water. Its current is more rapid than the Mississippi or the Amazon, and its volume more than a thousand times greater. Its waters, as far out as Carolina coasts, are of an indigo blue. They are so distinctly marked that the line of junction with the common seawater may be traced with the eye. Often one-half of the vessel may be perceived floating in the Gulf Stream water, while the other half is in the common water of the sea, so sharp is the line and want of affinity between these waters; and such, too, the reluctance, so to speak, on the part of those of the Gulf Stream to mingle with the waters of the sea. In addition to this there is another peculiar fact. The fishermen on the coast of Norway are supplied with wood from the tropics by the Gulf Stream. Think of the Arctic fishermen burning upon their hearths the palms of Hayti, the mahogany of Honduras, and the precious woods of the Amazon and Orinocco!—The Homiletic Review.

God's Tenderness (594).

I went into the hospital the other day to visit a friend who was ill there, and was attracted by a most beautiful perfume bottle covered with sandalwood. The delicacy of the fragrance was very delicious. I came away thinking of it, and, looking the matter up afterwards, I saw the statement that the sandal tree

has such exquisite fragrance that it even perfumes the ax that lays it low. It is like that with the shepherd's rod and staff. The loving purpose makes even its rude use sometimes comforting. God's love is so tender that, even though we must be disciplined and dragged back from the edge of danger, we are comforted by it.—The Sunday School Times.

Our Gracious Guide (595).

When a party sets out to climb a mountain there are many things to carry: food for the meals, dishes in which to cook the food, warm wraps, perhaps a shelter-tent and bedding. This is divided among the climbers, the most being given to the strongest, and very little or nothing to the weakest. But the guide always carries several times as much as any one else, and often when some climber appears to be growing exhausted the guide will take his burden from him and add it to his own. This is exactly what Christ does for those whom He guides through life.—Amos R. Wells.

Christ's Ready Sympathy (597).

He was entreated of him and heard his supplications. "For one step the sinner takes toward God, God takes ten toward the sinner." A poor fallen girl, in rapid decline, was urged to return to her parents. "They would never receive me," the poor sinner said. But word was sent to them and back came the money for her journey, and on the envelope, "Immediate! Immediate!"

The Cost of Sympathy (598).

He who would sympathize must be content to be tried and tempted. There is a hard and boisterous rudeness in our hearts by nature, which requires to be softened down. We pass by suffering gayly, carelessly; not in cruelty, but unfeelingly, just because we do not know what suffering is. We wound men by our looks and our abrupt expressions without intending it, because we have not been taught the delicacy, and the tact, and the gentleness, which can only be learnt by the wounding of our own sensibilities. There is a haughty feeling in uprightness which has never been on the verge of fall, that requires humbling. There is an inability to enter into difficulties of thought, which marks the mind to which all things have been presented superficially, and which has never experienced the horror of feeling the ice of doubt crashing beneath the feet.

Therefore, if you aspire to be a son of consolation you must be willing to pay the price of temptation resisted.

SERVICE XLI.

The Power of Example.

Philippians 3: 17.

"An Ensample."

Lesson:—Philippians 3: 7-21.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. Every life is **a center of influence.**
2. **Conscious, voluntary effort** to sway others.
3. Unconscious influence.
4. **Take heed** that good and not evil may be radiated from your life.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Inspirations. (599)—Our lives are wondrously hallowed by contact with individuals whose atmosphere is that of Christ-likeness. "There are men and women in whose company we are always at our best. While with them we can not think mean thoughts or speak ungenerous words. All the best stops of our nature are drawn out by their intercourse, and we find a music in our souls that was never there before." But who can measure the uplifting, inspiring effect of a daily companionship with the Christ ,himself? "Ten minutes," said Professor Drummond "spent in his society every day, ay! two minutes, if it be face to face, and heart to heart, will make the whole day different."

Jesus Writings. (600)—No one can write such a living epistle save Jesus Christ himself. That is the value of the testimony. That was Paul's cheering confidence concerning those to whom he wrote. He knew that no one other than the Christ whom he had preached, the Saviour whom he had brought to these present witnesses, could have wrought in them the work which all men might now see. They were the evident, undeniable proof that a divine, living Lord had breathed them into life, who once were dead, and that the apostle who had been that Lord's messenger was indeed the messenger of the uttermost truth. The witness that their lives gave to the truth and power of the apostle's ministry was also the testimony to the divine Master in whose name the apostle had come.

These living epistles are written, not in the great lives like that of Livingstone alone, but in the simpler, more commonplace life of the every-day man. It is in these lives, wrought out in the midst of the dust and hurry and grind of the common things, that the living epistle will be most clearly known and read of all men. Here is the place for the confession of the ordinary disciple. There were only twelve apostles. There were seventy messengers. There are the millions of the present-day disciples to whom other men are looking to read in them the truth or the falsity of this gospel of Jesus Christ. For each one of these there is the responsibility of his own witness.—The Presbyterian.

Example and Influence. (601)—There are two sides to be considered in the public life of a Christian. First, the life of example, and then the life of aggressive influence. While the Christian must never become self-conscious, he must know that he is bearing witness, and that the Master is judged by the life that His child leads. Therefore, he must avoid all appearance of evil; he must show by his words, and by his acts, and by the whole movement of his life, that kindness and gentleness which Jesus himself showed when he was upon earth; he must avoid positively even those things which for him may be innocent, if there is danger of his injuring others by doing them.—Floyd Tompkins, D. D.

God Our Refuge. (602)—At the time of the terrible accident, a year or two ago, at the coal mines near Scranton, Pa., several men were buried for three days, and all efforts to rescue them proved unsuccessful.

The majority of the miners were Germans. They were in a state of intense excitement, caused by sympathy for the wives and children of the buried men and despair at their own balked efforts.

A great mob of ignorant men and women assembled at the mouth of the mine on the evening of the third day in a condition of high nervous tension which fitted them for any mad act. A sullen murmur arose that it was folly to dig farther—that the men were dead. And this was followed by cries of rage at the rich mine owners.

A hasty word or gesture might have produced an outbreak of fury. Standing near me was a little German girl, perhaps eleven years old. Her pale face and frightened glances from side

to side showed that she fully understood the danger of the moment. Suddenly, with a great effort, she began to sing in a hoarse whisper which could not be heard. Then she gained courage, and her sweet, childish voice rang out in Luther's grand old hymn, familiar to every German from his cradle, "A mighty fortress is our God."

There was silence like death. Then one voice joined the girl's, and presently another and another, until from the whole great multitude rose the solemn cry:

"With force of arms we nothing can,
Full soon are we o'erridden.
But for us fights the godly Man,
Whom God himself hath bidden.
Ask ye his name?
Christ Jesus is his name."

A great quiet seemed to fall upon their hearts. They resumed their work with fresh zeal, and before morning the joyful cry came up from the pit that the men were found—alive. Never was a word more in season than that child's hymn.—Our Young Folks.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Secret of His Influence (603).

At a dinner in Philadelphia one evening I asked an elder of Dr. Maltbie D. Babcock's New York church what was the secret of the unusual place which he took in that city during his short stay there. He replied by saying that Dr. Babcock doubtless had a peculiarly attractive personality, but that he gave you the impression from the very first that he counted it such a splendid thing to be a Christian that he wanted everybody else to be one. His preaching and his personal conversation, his whole manner of life, made you feel that he had the one passion to make men know him.—Mahood.

Following Others' Lead (604).

I was sitting by a friend on the front seat in a large congregation; the long meter doxology was sung without announcement at the end of a hymn. "Let us stand up," she whispered, and rose to her feet. I turned to see, and the whole audience were following her example. Observe the people in a public place where there is a "nickel-in-the-slot" machine. If one drops

in a coin half a dozen follow. If a beggar gets something from the first man in a row of seats on the ferry-boat he is successful all along the line; if the first man shakes his head it is hardly worth while to go on. Such little things illustrate our social human nature. We need not go far, not indeed outside ourselves, to see how words and deeds bound and rebound like shuttles weaving the fabric of character and of society. We are like sheep; when one goes through a hole in the fence all the rest follow. How beautiful to lead in the right direction! We may do more good so than by the eloquence of preaching. Indeed, living is the most effective preaching. St. Paul believed his example was more weighty than his words; he says, "Follow me as I follow Christ."—Sunday School Journal.

Influence the Shadow Cast by Character (605).

All we do is always a part of all we are. We note often how the best things we do seem to be the result of accident. Mme. Curie discovered radium when she was looking for something else. A French scientist, M. Balard, thought that by passing chlorine gas through sea-water he would get iodine. What he actually discovered by his experiment was a new thing, bromine. Sir Isaac Newton's apple, whose fall led to his researches on gravitation, has been the theme of endless comment. Stevenson's famous Jekyll and Hyde story came to him in a dream. But in all these cases the accidental and chance side is, we perceive, only on the surface. They do not happen by chance, or to "chance" people. What happened to Mme. Curie happened to a mind that was trained to observe, that was all intent on this particular line of things. And Newton's apple became famous because it was a Newton that witnessed its fall. It would have carried in it no gravitation theory to a yokel. And Stevenson's dream came to him after a long course of thinking on that problem of the two natures in man which formed the pivot of his story. Some of the greatest speeches have been improvisations. But Mirabeau, who was a master in that line, has an instructive note about them. Says he: "The first condition for successful improvisation is that you know your subject thoroughly." What you do, what you achieve at the moment, however accidental it may appear, is really the result of what you have been doing in all the previous moments of your life.—J. Brierly.

Spiritual Aroma (606).

I was talking to a Christian brother about a certain religious publication. He said, "What it contains is all true, but it lacks fragrance or spiritual flavor." I replied that when I took up an article to read, I could soon tell whether the writer was surrendered to God or not. I have often seen sermons in print that were excellent in conception, in division, in language, in illustration, and in logic, but lacking in spiritual aroma. They were cold and intellectual, not having spiritual flavor. Spiritual fragrance can only come through spiritual conditions. When I find a soul surrendered to God, I feel communion with them in what they say. The fact of their abandonment to God produces spiritual feeling, and no person can counterfeit it. People may imagine they can, but they cannot, and it cannot be hid. It is like Christ: "He could not be hid," Mark 7:24. Preaching without spiritual aroma is like a rose without perfume. "Christ's name is like ointment poured forth." We can only get the perfume by getting more of Christ.—Episcopal Recorder.

The Web of Life (607).

We are each weaving our web of life. What are we putting into it? The spider's web is beautifully perfect. What will your life-web be like if you go on weaving it as you are now doing? Are you taking some of the material for your weaving from the next little friend's slate or copybook at school? Are you letting someone else perform the duty which is yours? Are you leaning upon someone else, and have you no confidence in yourself? O, what a poor, spoiled thing, full of gaps and ragged places, will be your web—your life! You must change all that. Put all your best energy into your web. Work out your own lessons, do your own errands, and learn to depend upon your own resources, if you wish to build up a beautiful, strong life. You have watched mother or the maid at home sweep down the spider's web with one fell stroke of brush; as you grow older you will see many of the things you have worked for swept away in the same way. If you have not this trust in yourself, and have not acquired the habit of rising superior to circumstances, you will make very little of your life. Watch the spider whose web has been swept away. Is it daunted? Not at all; he builds again.

Spiders have played their part in history. When the French invaded Holland, a prisoner, whose only friends were spiders,

after observing them and studying their ways, saw in them the usual signs shown by them before the coming of a frost. He managed to send his friends outside a message, saying that the country, which was inundated with water, would soon be frozen over, and they would be able to march over the ice-bridged swamps and lakes. The frost came, and with it the French soldiers, and Holland was taken. The spiders had much to do with the success of that exploit.—Rev. James Learmount "In God's Orchard."

The Odor of Sanctity (608).

It is told of a merchant in Brighton, the scene of the celebrated Frederick W. Robertson's ministry, that in his study he has a portrait of Robertson directly over the fireplace. "Whenever I feel tempted to act selfishly or to trade dishonestly," he is reported to have said, "I repair to the study, and the look from Robertson's benign eyes gives me access of strength and a fresh impulse to better ways of living." It will be remembered, too, that Tennyson was influenced quite as potently by his dead friend Hallam. The "In Memoriam," in which the poet embalmed that precious memory of early friendships, was not completed until many years after Hallam's death. Yet how fresh and moving is the sense of his presence and power:

"Whatever ways my days decline,
I felt and feel, though left alone,
His being working in mine own,
The footsteps of his life in mine."

An Humble Life (609).

I have heard of one who on his death-bed said, that if, as he humbly trusted, he had been led to yield himself to his Saviour, and so to find hope in death, it was by the simple and solemn warning of one, in whom simple earnestness and heart-felt piety gave force to the words of early youth, unsophisticated and sincere. But if it be thus true, what a solemn responsibility rests upon every Christian!—Boyd.

SERVICE XLII.

Triumph Over Temptation.

James 1:2.

"Divers Temptations."

Lesson:—Matthew 4:1-11.

1. Life is a place of testing.
2. Temptations resisted yields character.
3. Christ provides needed grace for the triumph of his tempted followers.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Tried and Tested. (610)—There are temptations before us. This must needs be. The grapes must be pressed or there will be no wine. The gold must be tried in the furnace. The bell must be beaten with sledges before it is hung in the tower. Blest is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried he shall receive—character; the crown of life.

But we are never alone in the hour of trial unless we choose to be. A wrongdoer says: "I couldn't help it; the temptation was greater than I could bear." This is never true. The word of the Lord assures us to the contrary. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will always with the temptation make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it."—David James Burrell, D. D.

The Universal Way. (611)—There is one experience which no man ever escaped or can ever escape: that is, the experience of temptation. This life necessarily tests every man who passes through it, and on this hinge of temptation our character turns to good or to evil, and by it is our destiny determined. Without temptation no sin would be committed; and without temptation no holiness could be attained. The human wrecks that seem beyond all capacity of repair and refitting, and the victorious athletes of righteousness whom their fellow-men adore, are alike the products of temptation. For it is impossible to see how, without temptation and the training involved in it, men can attain purity and strength of character. All moral worth lies in the will; God cannot confer holiness upon you by a simple act: you must choose it. It is not your holiness until you choose it. Nay, it is not yours until your choice has become a habit, until by a thousand repetitions of choice you have become habitually

righteous. And these repeated choices of good, these ever-renewed righteous acts, will be productive of habitual personal achieved holiness in you, just in proportion to their difficulty—that is, to the amount of resolution or will that is needed to perform them.—Marcus Dods, D. D.

Gravitation. (612)—Why do men stand upright? It is because the earth pulls them down. If a man yields to its attractions he soon finds himself prone on the ground. In this attitude he is helpless. He can do nothing there, so he reacts against the force of gravitation. He stands on his feet, and the more powerful the force may be, the more necessary it is that the active man should resist it. When the need for activity ceases, man no longer stands erect. He yields to the force he has resisted. When he is asleep the force of gravitation has its own way so far as his posture is concerned. But activity and life demand reaction, and it is only through resistance that man can conquer adversity.

In like manner, temptation has its part to play in the development of character. The strength of life is increased by the conquest of temptation. We may call no man virtuous till he has won such a victory. It is not the absence of temptation, but the reaction from it, that insures the persistence of virtue. If sin entice thee, consent thou not, and after a while its allurements will cease to attract.—David Starr Jordan.

Cheerfulness. (613)—A devotional writer of the present day, in answer to the question, "How are we to overcome temptations?" says, "Cheerfulness is the first thing, cheerfulness is the second, and cheerfulness is the third." It is very true. Faint heart never won anything that was worth winning,—least of all a spiritual battle. Whereas victories have often been won against fearful odds by some news which have raised the spirits of the troops. Lightness and brightness of heart, and an unfailing elasticity of spirit, must characterize the good soldier of Jesus Christ, if he is to break his way to the heavenly country through the serried ranks of his spiritual foes.—Goulburn.

Power to Overcome. (614)—It is immaterial how strong may be your inherited tendencies towards evil, or the habits which you have formed by successive acts of sin—God is able to give you deliverance, and to keep you from being overcome. It is possible even for you to abstain from the fleshly lusts which have been subjugating your soul, as Moabites and Philistines

did the fair land of Israel in the days when the Judges ruled. Every command carries a promise at its heart; and this loving entreaty for a better, purer life hides a Divine undertaking that you shall yet be more than conqueror, putting your foot on flesh and self, and reigning where now you groan in slavery. Take heart! it is possible even for you to abstain from fleshly lusts, because God is able to keep.—Rev. F. B. Meyer.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Two Men In One (615).

The story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is wonderfully true to life. The ancients used to believe that every man had within himself really two men—one good and the other bad. St. Paul himself says: "When I would do good, evil is present with me." It is this internal conflict which is the most trying of all. We can, in a measure, understand the temptation which another man places in our way, and steel ourselves to resist it. We can understand the direct temptations of Satan even though he sometimes may come as an angel of light, and cry with the Master, "Get thee behind me." But when we are tempted from within, when our own selves seek to lead us astray, then indeed we are perplexed. But in all these temptations the same general rules will apply.—Ian Maclaren.

The Weak Spot (616).

Edinburgh Castle, perched on its grey crags, is said to have been captured only once; and then through a shepherd leading a small storming party up the precipitous western cliffs, which had been left undefended because deemed to be inaccessible. And yet there was benefit even in that apparent disaster, because it indicated a weak spot in the defences for all after-time, and led to a more perfect line of fortification. So we may be thankful when temptation assails us, indicating some point of our character which needs immediate attention, and summoning us to look into the Divine storehouse for some special and unrealized form of grace, which from that moment is claimed and appropriated by the exercise of faith.—Rev. F. B. Meyer.

The Hedge (617).

In that beautiful story of the lost paradise, God pulls down the hedge built around Adam and Eve. The government through a fence outside was succeeded by self-government inside. The hermit and the cloistered saint end their careers in innocence.

But the struggler unto blood against sin, ends his career with character. We admire the child's innocence, but it lacks experience and maturity; it is only a handful of germs. But every heart kindles and glows when the true hero stands forth in the person of some Paul or Savonarola, some Luther or Lincoln, having passed through fire, through flood, through all the thunder of life's battles, ever ripening, sweetening, and enlarging, his fineness and gentleness being the result of greath strength and great wisdom, accumulated through long life, until he stands, at the end of his career, as the sun stands on a summer afternoon just before it goes down.—N. D. Hillis, D. D.

Overcome By Evil (618).

The process of yielding to temptation is thus stated by the poet Pope:

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
That to be hated needs but to be seen,
But seen too oft, familiar with its face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

If your nature were fully conformed to the divine this dalliance with evil would not be permitted. Neither would you at any time have need to shed a tear of repentance in view of its frequent and victorious forays.

The deep and ever present consciousness of this absence of full inner conformity to the character and will of God, extorted from the Apostle to the Gentiles the agonizing cry, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?"

The Devil's Methods (619).

Has not the devil haunted us all at times with more doubts than Robert Buchanan raises in his Book of Orm—doubts of God's being, of his nature, of our immortality, of the Bible as God's word, of our original conversion, of our present acceptance, of our final salvation? Some minds have wandered in the thick muck of doubt till their thought was lost in chaos and night; then doubt has ended in despair and the soul weltered in darkness, like a man struggling in a midnight sea.

Sin's Deceit (621).

In South America there is what they call the phosphorescent spider whose tactics are to emit a mild, fascinating sort of light until the bug, attracted partly by curiosity and partly by a species of hypnotism, is well within clutches that give him no further opportunity for investigation.

SERVICE XLIII.

God's Overruling Love.

Romans 8:28.

"All things work together for good to them that love God."

Lesson:—Romans 8:31-39.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Our Heavenly Father** is (1) All-**loving**, (2) All-**wise**, (3) All-**powerful**.

2. His infinite love, wisdom and power **combine to promote our welfare.**

3. This knowledge should **breed confidence.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Great Commander. (622)—God is a Ruler commanding innumerable and invincible super-terrestrial powers; angels, stars, and ages are in his retinue, and none may withstand him. How wonderfully has this claim already justified itself! The brazen gates of Rome were opened to him; he entered in triumph the dark doors of the northern nations. Doors closed for ages, doors which appeared sealed for ever, are to welcome the Messiah. Is not the spectacle before our eyes? The portals of India are unbarred; the hoary doors of China are groaning on their hinges; the citadel of Burma surrenders; the venerable gates of Japan are ajar. The doors of idol shrines, choked by the bitter weeds of ages, give him entrance; the jealously guarded palaces of paganism are yielding to a diviner sovereignty; and heathen nations, long isolated and impenetrable, are beginning to acknowledge his sway. And the defiant must yield. Gates of brass and bars of iron will open of themselves.—William L. Watkinson.

Paul's Desires—Our Desires. (623)—One of the earnest desires of St. Paul was that he might preach the gospel in Rome. In his letter to the Christians there, he tells them that in his prayers he includes a petition that he might come to them. He assures them that he purposed not once or twice to come, but "often times" and that hitherto he had been prevented. But his desire has not diminished with successive disappointments. "I long to see you," he insists, "that I may impart unto you some

spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established." How keen then must have been his chagrin when, after his seizure and detention for two whole years, he found himself on the way to Rome indeed—but in bonds! He had written "I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." But how could that be now, when he was going in chains? But turn to one of those matchless letters written from his imprisonment—the one to the Philippians. And what do we find him saying? This: "I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel, so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places; and many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds are much more bold to speak the word without fear." It is the same testimony that comes from the Roman captivity of the Apostle Paul that we hear in these latter days from Secretary Dickinson, that events which seemed to defeat most cherished hopes turned out rather to their furtherance. "Ill-luck!" exclaimed Carlyle in looking back to one of the keenest disappointments of his younger days—"ill-luck! take it quietly; you can never be sure but that it may be good and the best."—Lutheran Observer.

Building Us For Eternity. (624)—There is another world than this for which God is molding men, and sorrow is a most essential process for the perfecting of the soul. Which of us as individuals would like to eliminate from our life all the passages and workings of its sorrow? And what is true of the individual is true of the race. Sorrow in this life, and under present conditions, is a hallowed thing—a ministering angel if an angel veiled. We have been redeemed by sorrow. "Sweet are the uses of adversity."

"Behold mankind beneath God's pestle ground,
That Stone of Sorrow, bruising flesh and soul;
Age-long their blood outpours, their groans resound—
Ask ye of God—'What ending to this dole?'

"Thus saith He, 'I prepare for coming years,
Love without lust, and Passion without taint;
What man is joyous who is strange to tears?
What man is virtuous but the tempted saint?'"

If it behooved the All-wise "to make the Captain of our salvation perfect through suffering," suffering must have blessed issues with regard to those for whom that salvation was won in the Garden and on the Cross. Nay, the story of the ages and the history of human progress demonstrate that it is so. "Not to have discerned," says one, "the relation of sorrow to virtue, is the leading defect pervading all the Greek moral philosophy." —Robert P. Dounes, D. D.

Farewells. (625)—When David Livingstone bade farewell to his home, it was with the 121st psalm as his parting words, as his sister has written: "We got up at five o'clock. My mother made coffee. David read the psalm and prayed, 'The Lord is thy Keeper. The sun shall not smite on thee by day nor the moon by night.' Then he walked to Glasgow to catch the Liverpool steamer. He never saw his father again."

Thus Greatheart goes, without much speech but with great sureness, to the opening of the dark continent to the light.

When Hannington took his last journey, knowing well that it was almost certainly the end, it was with this psalm as the hidden music of his march. Every morning of the march he greeted the sunrise with what he called his "Traveling Psalm": "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil, He shall preserve thy soul." And this is the right word. It is the "Traveling Psalm."—"Sculptors Of Life."

ILLUSTRATIONS.

An Artist Missionary (626).

Many years ago a poor young English artist stood before his canvass, painting the picture of "A Lost Woman." As the picture grew, the artist's soul became more and more absorbed in the tragedy he was attempting to portray. It represented a stormy winter's night, and the poor woman, thinly clad, with her babe pressed to her bosom, wends her way along the dark, deserted street. Only faint light flickers here and there, and all doors are closed and barred. As he developed the distress on the poor woman's face, he could no longer control his feelings, but threw his brush to the floor and exclaimed, "Why not go out and seek to save the really lost?"

Acting on the impulse, he left his studio, and, determining to prepare himself for the ministry, repaired to Oxford, and by the aid of his pencil and brush and other toil paid his expenses

through. Then for two years he held an appointment in the north of England. But wishing to come in closer touch with the lost, he repaired to London to work in the slums. Prebendary Fox's interest led him into the Church Missionary House, where he labored for five years more.

At last one day with deep feeling he told the venerable Secretary that he could no longer satisfy his conscience with such work in a land of so much light, and that it was his burning desire to go to the darkest lands and seek the most helpless of the lost. At his own earnest request he was sent as a missionary to East Africa, and in course of time was called to succeed the martyr Hannington as the Bishop of Uganda.—The Presbyterian.

Special Providence (627).

"It is the fault of the present day to think, and to act, as if man could do everything, and to forget God's special providence. Hence that busybodyness which distinguishes the religious world, and prevents that depth of piety which is the result of sober, calm reflection, and which shows itself in doing calmly, and unostentatiously, not what seems likely to be attended with the greatest results, but simply the duty our hand findeth to do." —Dean Hook.

God's Time-Table (628).

Grief has come into her life, grief almost too heavy to bear, but long ago she learned to trust Him and to allow him to share her burdens. Her hair is gray and her step slow, but her confidence in him is now brighter than ever. It was only two short years ago that husband and father were carried to the humble home dead, killed by the fall of rock in the coal-shaft. Then a second tragedy: her eldest son stricken in the same "workings," and in a few moments breathed his last. These two great sorrows within a few months of each other, and her faith wavers not.

Again the shadowy form of sorrow creeps into her home, and the two remaining breadwinners, son and daughter, are cut down within a few days of each other—the son to be taken to the hospital to languish with a wasting fever, and the daughter to be confined to the home for many weeks. The resources of the home are almost exhausted, yet her faith is clear, and she cries: "God doeth all things well."

She is slowly making her way up the long walk that leads to the hospital, there to lay down her remaining few dollars for her son's care. She had been to God in prayer, asking him for "some things," as she said. She knew not how these "some things" were to be given, but she trusted. Near the hospital she came face to face with a man she had known years ago, a retired physician. He greeted her kindly, and soon learned of her recent sorrows. "Your son is now in this hospital, you say? Have you paid anything for his care? Well, you shall pay nothing more, and your son may stay as long as he desires, and he will have the best of care. I will so order." And thus it is that she believes God answers prayer, and her faith is strengthened in the Lord. Can anyone doubt that God made it possible for the burden laden widow who had reached man's extremity and the prosperous friend of other days to meet at that particular moment? God's "time-table" is never in error.—Rev. H. H. Barr, in Pittsburg Christian Advocate.

Overruled (629).

Having determined that Paul should not be murdered then and there, it was easy for the Lord to defeat the plot by any means. He can use an obscure boy or He can commission the captain of the Roman guard to execute his will. When God wants to do a thing, the most obscure and unseemly instruments become most effective weapons. What is so harmless and so peaceful as a snowflake? And yet when God wanted to smite Napoleon's army in Russia he did it with this inoffensive weapon. What is so gentle as a rain-drop and the wind that fans the fevered brow? And yet with these God smote the Spanish Armada. Who would expect twelve fishermen, suddenly elevated to be teachers and preachers, to accomplish much? And yet Christ used them to lay the foundations of His Church. Who so wanting in influence in and with the world as a monk in the convent? And yet God could use Luther to revolutionize the world.

God's Higher Plan (630).

Charles Simeon had promised to preach a missionary sermon, but fell ill; Dr. Stewart was asked to fill the gap, and among his hearers was the youthful Alexander Duff, who from that sermon was convinced, and resolved to be a missionary.

SERVICE XLIV.

Zeal.

Titus 2: 14.

"Zealous of Good Works."

Lesson:—Nehemiah 4: 7-18.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **We have a great work to do.** 1. In spreading Christ's Kingdom. 2. In saving men. 3. In building character.
2. **The time is short.** "The night cometh."
3. **All of our energies and time** should be consecrated to the task.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

The Second Mite. (631)—It is the hour cut out of the vital day, it is that piece of time cut right out of your warm, sweet home-life and given to the poor that will be the season of miracles, for "if a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it bringeth forth much fruit." You can spare half-a-crown! It is the half-crown you can't spare which bears the hall-mark of Calvary and is the minister of redemptive life. It is when our giving, whether of money, or strength, or time, touches the quick that it becomes vital, and existence passes into life, and we share the travail of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is sacrifice that makes all deeds effective. There is money and money. We are told that "a pound's a pound whoever gives it," whether by Dives, who is burdened with abundance, or by a widow who is surrendering her all. "A pound's a pound whoever gives it!" I have come to regard such speech as the most perilous and deadly nonsense. A pound may be a pound, whoever gives it, if you are only going to build a stable; but a pound may greatly differ from another pound if you are going to build the city of God. In these realms material gifts become shrines, and they may be full or empty of mystic spiritual power. I have come to believe that if a spiritual presence can tenant a material body, it is not incredible that a spiritual influence can accompany a material gift. In these realms the character of the giver determines the momentum of his gift. If there be sacrifice in the giver there will be spiritual power in the gift.—J. H. Jowett, D.D.

Helpfulness. (632)—To-day is your day and mine, the only day we have, the day in which we play our part. What our part may signify in the great whole we may not understand; but we are here to play it, and now is our time. This we know; it is a part of action, not of whining. It is a part of love, not cynicism. It is for us to express love in terms of human helpfulness. This we know, for we have learned from sad experience that any other course of life leads toward weakness and misery.—David Starr Jordan.

Personal Zeal for Persons. (634)—It may be that our zeal is sometimes misdirected. Zeal for souls comes before zeal for the Church. Some say that we need revivals to raise up workers for the Church. Or we need revivals because we can not as a Church live without them. This is perhaps true. But there is a greater reason than either of these why we need revivals. We need revivals because so many dear, precious souls are yet unsaved. Our mission is to save souls. We should have a proper zeal for the Church to be sure and support all her interests; but give us souls and the Church will have the workers and live.

True Discontent. (634)—It is not the discontent that whines, but that which works that wins our respect. That dissatisfaction of a man with himself that leads him out upon the road to better things, to self-improvement, is the only noble discontent. And all the improvement in his circumstances that does not induce self-improvement, is worse than worthless. Even when a man has gained all his heart could desire from the world, the greatest thing about him is his refusal to be satisfied with the contentment things are supposed to bring with them. There are voices to tell him that he may be better than he is, and no earnest soul can rest while that message rings in his ears.—Christian Intelligencer.

No Half and Half. (635)—We have in England a society in one of our churches called the Out and Out Society. Did you not hear of it? It is the Out and Out Society, but a great many belong to the in and out society. You know what I mean, you business men. I went to a business men's great meeting. Hundreds were moving towards God and they came to the inquiry room. We wanted more workers, and I went to a good brother who was an office bearer. I said, "We want you in the inquiry room." He said, "What for?" "To save some inquirers." He

said, "There is Mrs. So-and-so; get her to go, I am not used to it." I said, "Are you a Christian? Go and get used to it." He said, "I have been one on and off for—." That is the curse of the church of God. That is the hindrance. That is at the base of our failure. The Lord makes us out and out for Christ. I tell you honestly, nothing else but a full salvation would ever keep this nature of mine. Nothing else but to be all in and all out for God would satisfy me. I must be one thing or the other, and you are trying to be two things. I am not surprised you have a miserable time with one hand on the shore and one stretched out a little over the ocean of God's love. I am not surprised. Let God be everything. Be an out and out Christian and you will be a blessing to yourself and your neighbor. Launch out! There is another reason. If you want to get big fish you must launch out into deep water. The big fish only live in deep water. God has sent me here to talk to you about Jesus.—Gypsy Smith.

Hard Work and Talent. (636)—If the power to do hard work is not talent, it is the best possible substitute for it. Things don't turn up in this world until somebody turns them up. A pound of pluck is worth a ton of luck. Luck is an ignis fatuus. You may follow it to ruin, but never to success.—Garfield.

Fire and Furnace. (637)—Brethren, not to be all aflame is madness, if we believe our own creed. Isaiah says in one of his gigantic metaphors, "The Lord's fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem." Does that apply to most of our churches? A fire and a furnace—does that describe this church? An ice-house would be a better illustration of the facts in a great many cases. "He shall baptize you with . . . fire"; and, if it does anything, it will kindle emotion.

Again, that fire cleanses by kindling. John's water-baptism washed the outside. There is a better way of making things clean than that. Fire purifies, either by melting down the obstinate ore and bringing the scum up to the top, from whence it may be skimmed, leaving the residue clear, or it cleanses by dissipating the cause of the foulness; and, as it passes off, the stain melts from the surface of the disfigured clay.

The great glory of the gospel is to cleanse men's hearts by raising their temperature, making them pure because they are made warm, and that separates them from their evils. It is slow work to take mallet and chisel, and try to chip off the rust, speck by speck, from a row of railings, or to punch the specks of iron

ore out of the ironstone. Pitch the whole thing into the furnace, and the work will be done, which being translated is, the true way for a man to be purged of his weaknesses, his meannesses, his passions, his lusts, his sins, is to submit himself to the cleansing fire of that divine Spirit.—Alexander Maclaren.

Fiery Truth. (638)—The fire of our earnestness must burn upon the hearth of faith in the truths which we preach, and faith in their power to bless mankind when the Spirit applies them to the heart. He who declares what or what may not be true, and what he considers upon the whole to be as good as any other form of teaching, will of necessity make a very feeble preacher. How can he be zealous about that which he is not sure of? If he knows nothing of the inward power of truth within his own heart, if he has never tasted and handled of the good word of life, how can he be enthusiastic? But if the Holy Ghost has taught us in secret places, and made our soul to understand within itself the doctrine which we are to proclaim, then shall we speak evermore with the tongue of fire.—Spurgeon.

It will cost you nothing to be just such a Christian as the average of those around you; but to pass from the nominal indifference of the age to the entire and devoted Christianity of the New Testament, is almost as mighty a stride as to pass to it from the abominations of heathenism. Be assured that in such a cause singularity is wisdom, and a prudent accommodation to the world is madness. It is only a little while that they will have to laugh at you, or to say of any one of you, that he is beside himself. God, and eternity, and the Bible are with you, and what though the men of the world be against you? A few years will bring round your vindication; and amid the awful realities of the judgment, it will appear that the way of the derided Christian is indeed a way of truth and soberness!—Chalmers.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Dauntless Determination (639).

There is a story told of the early life of the great French painter, Bastien Lepage. In his early life his steps seemed to be dogged by disaster. He was a delicate child, but always had artistic tastes. His mother was poor and worked in the fields to earn the money to keep the sickly boy at school. When he was only fifteen he went alone to Paris and almost starved for

seven years. He painted without achieving any success; still he persevered. He had what he thought to be a fine picture ready to send to the salon when Paris was besieged, and he rushed with his comrades to the trenches to fight for his country. On the first day a shell fell into his study and crashed through his picture, and another shell burst at his feet, wounding him. He was carried home and lay ill and idle for two long years. Then, reduced to absolute want, he painted cheap fans for a living. One day a manufacturer of some patent medicine ordered a picture from him to illustrate the virtues of his medicine. Lepage, who was always an artist and always sincere, put all his skill and ability into this picture. It was a sweet thing and represented a landscape in the April sunlight; the leaves quivered in the breeze, all nature seemed vital with life; a group of beautiful girls gathered around a fountain from which the elixir of life sprang in a bubbling stream. Lepage believed that at last he had achieved a success. "Let me offer it at the salon," he said to his employer. The man was delighted at the suggestion. "But first," he said, "paint a rainbow arching over the fountain with the name of my medicine upon it." Lepage refused. "Then," said the man, who had no soul for beauty and no love for art, "I will not pay you a sou for the picture." Then came the tug of war. Bread for months was in the price of that picture, and the painter had long known the want of bread. There was only a chance—a small chance too—that his picture would be admitted to the salon. How his hunger did cry out! But he was an artist, not a laborer. The artist in him conquered, and he carried his picture to the salon. It was accepted and was considered to be a great success. It gained for Lepage public recognition, and he ultimately became one of the greatest artists of his day. His great love for art and his triumph over the temptations to sell his talent for bread only marked him off as belonging to the artists and not to the day-laborers. Believe in God and your work. Put your soul into everything you have to do.

Absorbed In His Work (640).

Archimedes calmly pursued his studies in Syracuse amid the uproar of the assault; and when a soldier, with murderous weapons and intent, burst into his apartment, asked no other favor at his hand but a few more minutes to finish the problem he was engaged in solving. Even less noble passions may become

equally absorbing. A Roman army once fought with such enthusiasm as to be insensible to an earthquake that rocked the ground beneath their feet; and I knew a soldier who, with the foe before him, and comrades falling at his side, was raised so much above the sense of pain as never to discover that a ball from the French had shattered his wrist, till he found himself unable to fire the musket he had leveled at their ranks.—The Father's Business.

The Value of Time (641).

As we begin the work of another year we remind our readers of the value of time. Some people keep poor, because they do not know the value of pennies, and many people allow themselves to vegetate and to accomplish little or nothing, because they never learn to know the value of minutes.

After the battle of Rivoli, in which Napoleon defeated 50,000 Austrians with 30,000 Frenchmen, the great leader said: "The Austrians massacred admirably and might have crushed me, but they did not know the value of minutes." Many lives are lost because this lesson was never learned. Lord Macaulay, when complimented on his genius, said: "Madam, do you call it genius? I call it hard sweat."

Exactly so! For even a genius, wasteful of time, will accomplish nothing; whereas, a far less talented man, fully aware to the value of time, may accomplish wonders.

Quenchless Zeal (642).

The facts of biography as well as our own consciousness veto this theory by showing that will and conscience make circumstances instead of being ruled by them. One of America's prominent astronomers is only four feet high, and would hardly outweigh a boy of ten years. But there are few who could outweigh him in intellect and achievement. Alexander H. Stephens with a dwarf's body did a giant's work. With only a broken scythe, by sheer force of will and work, he overmatched in the harvest those who had better ones. It might have been said of him, as of Candlish, "There's nae muckle o' him, but there's a deal in him." —Wilbur F. Crafts, D.D.

No Provision for Return (643).

Romans put the torch to the fleet which had brought them to Britain, and in the event of failure would have brought them

back to Italy. With the glare of that brave conflagration on their eagles, banners, and serried ranks, we cannot wonder that, with such sons to fight her battles, Rome rose from a petty town to be the mistress of the world. Both her destiny and their determination were to be plainly seen in the blaze of their burning ships. Bringing to the enterprise such an indomitable spirit, and such decision of character, unless the stars of heaven fought against them as against Sisera, how could they fail to conquer?—Guthrie.

Too Busy to Doubt (644).

There is a quaint legend which tells how, some years after the event, St. Thomas was again troubled with agonizing doubts as to our Lord's resurrection. He sought the Apostles, and began to pour his soul's troubles into their ears. But first one, then the other, looked at him in astonishment, and told the unhappy doubter that he was sorry for him, but really he had so much to do he had not time to listen to his tale. Then he was fain to impart his woes to some devout women. But they, as busy as Dorcas, and in like employment, soon made him understand that they had no leisure for such thoughts as these. At last it dawned upon him that perhaps it was because they were so busy that they were free from the doubts by which he was tortured. He took the hint; he went to Parthia, occupied himself in preaching Christ's gospel, and was never troubled with doubts any more.—Herald and Presbyter.

From Thackeray's Diary (645).

"Began 'Newcomes' 7th July, 1853, finished 20th June, 1855, seven o'clock in the morning. That is your true secret!"

No Flag of Truce (646).

The Japanese navy is said not even to have possessed a flag of truce in their recent war with Russia.

SERVICE XLV.

Obedience.

I Peter 1: 14.

"Obedient Children."

Lesson:—Exodus 24.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **The Great Commandment—"Love."**
2. The best evidence of love—**Obedience.**
3. The spirit in which obedience should be rendered—**Child-likeness.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Day by Day. (646)—There is no hardship ahead of us in life that may not be made easier by our doing the hard thing of to-day with unflinching faithfulness. And every hardship that lies ahead will be the harder to meet by any failure of ours in to-day's test. This day's testing and trial are sure to be severe. It probably seems unfairly so. It may be the hardest we have ever yet known. It is sure to seem dull, and unattractive, and utterly lacking in those elements of picturesqueness or heroism or adventure that seem to mark the achievements of the world's great victors. But that is what makes it hard to the point of being worth while. And here is another reason for taking up its challenge manfully: "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off." How we ought to rejoice that there is something close at hand that is big enough to test us but not big enough to break us!—Gold Dust.

Obedience to Law. (647)—It is written that he that keeps God's law shall live by his obedience. More than one psalmist sang of the blessedness of the man who fears God and keeps his commandments. An upright life, strict morality joined to religious reverence, brings its own blessing. It is not strange that it should, for the moral law is only the law of life. Every beast bears in his own being a law—the law of his creation and therefore the laws of his Creator. It prescribes his food, his mode of life, his relations with his fellows. He cannot violate this law without a sacrifice of happiness. If he keeps it, he experiences

a measure of blessedness. With the beast, as with man, transgression brings death.

It cannot be said that life is the price of obedience. Life is the gift of God, but it flows through the channel of obedience.

While the law promises that they that obey shall live by their obedience, the gospel comes with life for the dead. It is hardly worth while to talk to a dying man of strict obedience to the laws of health. To offer him long life as a reward for such obedience would be unkind, for he cannot obey. The time for obedience is past. Even if life could be prolonged, wasted strength must be restored before such obedience is possible. Christ came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly. He gives life and still more life. He leads on to a higher and still a higher life.

Therefore he does not abolish the law. He makes it fuller. Law springs from life, and he that aspires to be a son of God undertakes to live under the highest and strictest law.

For the follower of Christ especially is it written: "He that doeth these things shall live by them."—The Christian Advocate.

You in Your Corner (648).

Where duty calls in life's conflict,
  There is your place!
Where you may think you are useless,
  Hide not your face,
God placed you here for a purpose,
  Whate'er it be,
Know he has chosen you for it;
  Work loyally.

Gird on your armor! Be faithful
  At toil or rest,
Whiche'er it be, never doubting
  God's way is best.
Whether waiting or working,
  Stand firm and true;
Do the work well that your Master
  Gives you to do.

—Helen M. Richardson, in the Churchman.

Men of Character. (649)—The call is for men, everywhere, who will draw the thing as they see it for the God of things as they are; men who have a great hunger and thirst after char-

acter, not after reputation, but after character. "Character," Mr. Moody used to say, "is what you are in the dark." Men are called for, who, when they are in action, are not always listening for the click of the camera and the scratch of the reporter's pencil, but men who are simply hungry and thirsty not for reputation, but for character, just content to be right, no matter at what cost; men who feel the deep disgrace of being willing to seem to be something more or better than they are taking the pains to become; men who feel the repulsive vulgarity of wanting something that another man ought to have.—Dean Bosworth.

The Last Half-Hour. (653)—You hear a call to service. An appeal is made for workers among the children of disadvantage and want. You say you have no time to spare. Perhaps if you had much time to spare the Master could not use it. I mean that if you had superfluities you might treat them as superfluities, and they would be impotent for service. "I can easily spare half an hour! I shall be delighted to offer that!" No, it's the half-hour we can't easily spare for which our Master is hungry. You say you have been "teaching all the week," and it would be "hard lines," and just because it would cost you something, and just because it would the offering would be blood-money, it would tell tremendously in the treasury of the Lord. It is when you get home from your work at night and there's a cheery fire in the grate, and the promise of slippered ease and inviting music is at hand, or an alluring book is at your elbow; and you feel the grip and the fascination of it all; and then you hear the cry of human need, like a moaning wind down a dreary street, and you rise, tired though you are with honest work, and you put on your coat again, and you go out into the cheerless night, and to a still more cheerless slum, to take Christ and cheer to the victim of night—it is then we begin to live and to raise others from the dead.—J. H. Jowett, D.D.

While it is Yet Day. (650)—Launch out into the deep. Tomorrow may never be yours. "Work, work, for the night cometh." I think if I could get to Heaven without a soul in my crown and I saw Moody and Whitfield and Wesley and Spurgeon and Finney and all those who helped to make this world what it is—if I should see them with all their spiritual children around them rejoicing and singing "the song of Moses and the Lamb," and I hadn't a soul with me, I think they would have to build a madhouse in the glory, for I do not think I could stay

there and remain sane. Do you know the luxury, the joy of leading a soul to Christ? You people with a million dollars, or five or six millions; what will it be worth when death comes? And what will it be worth in eternity? But you lead a little child to Jesus and you will shine as the stars forever in heaven. And if you are going to have that one at the beautiful gate waiting and watching for you, you must launch out into the deep. God help you to do it. Let us pray.

Duty's Reward. (651)—"One thing that ought to be done is to find the pleasure in every duty. It is there; and not to recognize it is a handicap that we have no right to carry. We may rest assured that the man who finds the deepest, most satisfying pleasure in life is the man who does his duty oftenest."

Laying Up Strength. (652)—Not in husbanding of strength, but in yielding it in service; not in burying our talents, but in administering them; not in hoarding our seed in the barn, but in scattering it; not in following an earthly human policy, but in surrendering ourselves to the will of God, do we find the safe and blessed path.—F. B. Meyer.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Creed the Underlying Principles of Service (654).

Three principles underlay the whole life of the Brethren: Each disciple is, first, to find his work in witness for God; second, his home where the widest door opens and the greatest need calls; and third, his cross in self-denial for Christ. As Count Zinzendorf said: "The whole earth is the Lord's; men's souls are all his; I am debtor to all."

Obedience at Any Cost (655).

In 1891, the late Hugh Beaver, then a student at State College, Pennsylvania, "was tingling with social happiness, and had a multitude of interests on the surface of life." Two years later, however, he heard the call of the Master, and became a Christian. It was not easy to give up plans he had formed for life; but he soon realized that he must be ready to do, not his own will, but the will of God. At the close of his senior year he was urged to undertake the student work of the Young Men's Christian Association of Pennsylvania. There was a severe struggle. Then he wrote, in his letter of acceptance: "I had other plans in view, but, for about three years, I have been calling for No. 107 of Gospel Hymns in about all the meetings I

have attended,—'My Jesus, as thou wilt,'—and it seemed that the spirit of the hymn should be a guide to me in this the first call that has cost me very much to obey. So you will find me next year, if God permits, doing what I can with his help, in our Pennsylvania colleges." This was his daytime for service. It was not long before his opportunity on earth was ended; for God called him home.—Robert Speer.

The Inspiration of Obedience (656).

But when above it all we have seen God, and known his justice and understood his love, then we can serve where everything is dark, and still have a heart at leisure from itself. Some of the brightest young fellows I know are those who live and work down in the slums. They see such scenes there, and they hear such cries, as might well make a quiet heart impossible. But they have seen God, and they eat and drink. It is God's world, and they are his co-workers. So are they happy, and serve with double ardor, because they have learned the secret of tranquility.—Rev. George H. Morrison.

"Go and Do It" (657).

If ever you find yourself where you have so many things pressing upon you that you hardly know how to begin, let me tell you a secret. Take hold of the very first one that comes to hand, and you will find the rest all fall into file and follow after, like a company of well-drilled soldiers; and though work may be hard to meet when it charges in a squad, it is easily vanquished when you can bring it into line. You may have often seen the anecdote of the man who was asked how he had accomplished so much in his life. "My father taught me," was the reply, "when I had anything to do, to go and do it." There is the secret—the magic word, "now."—Helpful Thoughts.

Son of Man (658).

Man's best work in the world is to be a man. George Eliot says that the greatest gift a hero makes to his age is to have been a hero. In Oriental usage it was common to designate a person's employment or life work by expressing it by the relation of sonship. A sailor was a son of the sea, a Bed'wy was the son of the desert, a farmer was the son of the soil. May it not be that Jesus loved best to call himself "Son of man" because of this usage? The phrase had in it, to his ears, and to those about him who heard him, the thought that it was his business to be a man.

That was his life work beyond and above everything else—to be a man. And just that is our life work, the greatest and best work we shall ever do—to be men and women in all the divine significance of life and love and service which manhood and womanhood at their highest mean. That is our business.—The Sunday School Times.

His Stamp (659).

"One Tuesday evening at the class, he referred to 'the bricks of Babylon'—how every brick had on it the king's stamp. 'So,' he said, 'everything we do should have the King's stamp on it.' One of his hearers, not long after, was set to the tedious work of cleaning a feather bed. Many a time she felt tempted to hurry over it, but 'the bricks of Babylon' kept ringing in her ears, and she had to do it all faithfully. When Dr. Bonar called to see her, she said to him, 'Oh, these bricks of Babylon were a trouble to me!' 'Were they on your dusters and brooms?' he asked. 'No, on a feather-bed!' she replied, to his great amusement!"—Reminiscences of Andrew A. Bonar.

"Their's But to Do" (660).

A well-known bishop who was preaching on behalf of foreign missions said:

"The best illustration which I have ever heard of the philosophy of missions is the story of an infidel master who said to his Christian slave: "Jim, you are the biggest fool I ever knew. You are always talking about faith in God, and I suppose you think that if the Lord should tell you to jump through the stone wall, your faith would take you through."

"Massa, dat's easy 'nough," was the answer. "If the Lord tell Jim to jump through dat stone wall, it's Jim's business to jump, and de Lord's business to get Jim through."

The Obedience of Loving Children (661).

It is not the deed we do,
  Though the deed be never so fair,
But the love that the dear Lord looketh for
  Hidden with lowly care
  In the heart of the deed so fair.
The love is the priceless thing,
  The treasure our treasure must hold,
Or ever the Lord will take the gift,
  Or tell the worth of the gold
  By the love that cannot be told.

—Harriet McEwen Kimball.

SERVICE XLVI.

The Keynote of the Christian Life—Gratitude.

Psalms 103: 1.

"Bless the Lord O my Soul."

Lesson:—Psalms 103.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. Salvation, free and full, is **God's gift to man.** Man can add nothing to it. Christ's finished work secured it.
2. The aim of right living should be **not to earn salvation, but to express gratitude for it.**
3. This substitutes **glad-hearted service** for servile drudgery.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Thanksgiving. (663)—More people know Psalm 103 by heart than know any other Psalm except the Twenty-third. The Twenty-third Psalm, it is supposed by many, was a Psalm of David's youth, and the One Hundred and Third, a Psalm of his maturer, experienced years. Every child should learn it, word for word, storing up riches for time of need in later years. It is one Psalm that Ruskin learned from his mother's lips in childhood and always loved, which went far to develop that which was true and lovable in his character.

Martyr's Chant. (664)—David Cargill was martyred at the Grassmarket in Edinburgh in 1681. A little lad, the son of a Nithsdale weaver, James Renwick by name, witnessed that martyrdom. It moved him so deeply that he joined himself to the Cameronians and began to prepare to preach, studying two years at Groningen. He was ordained in 1683, and upon his young shoulders fell the burden of conducting the affairs of the Cameronian party in Scotland. Fearlessly, faithfully, wisely he led the "saints" five years and was put to death for his piety in 1688, in that very Grassmarket where he had witnessed the death of David Cargill. He was the last martyr of "the Killing Times." The curses of the crowd and the rattling of drums, made loud to drown the last faithful words of the martyred, were unable to prevent the great multitude hearing his chanting of the 103rd Psalm as he died.—New York Observer.

Christian Like a Ship (665).

"Where your treasure is, there your heart is also."

If our treasure—our dearest treasure—is in the world, we are not likely to get very far above it. Rise we may, in a sense, but it will be as the kite rises, for all the height that it can go is just the length of the string that holds it to the earth; so when our worldly ties are broken by the winds of adversity, like the string of the kite, away we go, fluttering helplessly to hide our faces in the dust. But if our treasure be in heaven, the links that bind us to it cannot be broken; the wind and the whirlwind may do their worst. "We have an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."

Someone has said, it is all right for the ship to get into the water; the trouble comes when the water gets into the ship.

The water is the natural element of the ship, and while we are in the flesh the world is ours, so it is not easy to be in the world and not of the world. Like the water around the ship, the world is all about us, and so it is not easy to escape getting wet, so to speak; it is only by prayer and watchfulness that we can keep worldliness out of the heart. When this thing gets a fast hold of a Christian's life it cannot be productive of great good; fruit there may be, but it is likely to be dwarfed and sour and little better than that of the tree that had never been grafted; it needs the shining of God's face, and not the pomp and glitter of the world to develop Christian character, and to fill the mouth with praise and the soul with thanksgiving.—Christian Work.

Thankful for Friends. (666)—Among the occasions for thanksgiving our opportunities for personal service and our precious friendships take chief place. It is because we have friends, some who have been ours from childhood, others whom we have met as it seemed casually and recently, that life for us has its deep significance. The man without a country and the man without a friend must be equally forlorn. Our thanksgiving has in it a fuller chord because of our service and because of our friends. Yet in both these features of human existence there is room for caution. We are not to exhaust our capacity for service so that we become mere withered husks or shriveled fruit, nor are we to stand still in friendship.—Margaret Sangster.

Grateful and Thankful. (667)—The difference between gratitude and thankfulness is one of form. They are both an

inward feeling, an emotion. Gratitude, though, is the emotion only; thankfulness is the emotion plus its expression. Gratitude is the bud; thankfulness is the bud bursting into bloom, expressing itself in beauty and pouring out its soul in sweetest fragrance.—J. J. Bullen.

Hourly Blessings. (668)—For blessings innumerable we give thanks. One mercy from the hand of God is of great value. Daily mercies surprise us when we take a little time to think of it. That God should think of us every day, and prepare some suitable gift for us each day throughout the year, and never once fail, is enough to awaken in us wonder and gratitude. But our mercies from his bountiful hand are falling every hour, every minute, every second. Who shall reckon them up unto him in order?

We are not able to recount the mercies which we can recall. But there are far more which we cannot recall. Multitudes of them fall unnoticed into our life. We were not conscious of their advent, and if we had observed them at the time, we would not have recognized some of them as real blessings. They were blessings in disguise. It were easier to count the leaves of the forest or the sands on the seashore than to count the mercies of God for a single year. They are more than can be numbered. For mercies known and mercies unknown, let us give God thanks.

Thankfulness a Blessing. (669)—Cultivate the thankful spirit! It will be to thee a perpetual feast. There is, or ought to be, with us, no such thing as small mercies; all are great, because the least are undeserved. Indeed, a really thankful heart will extract motive for gratitude from everything, making the most even of scanty blessings.—J. R. MacDuff.

His Mercies Faileth Never. (670)—The thing that lasts in the universe is his kindness, which continues from everlasting to everlasting. What a revelation of God! O dear friends, if only our hearts could open to the full acceptance of that thought, sorrow and care and anxiety, and every other form of trouble, would fade away and we should be at rest. The infinite, undying, imperishable love of God is mine. Older than the mountains, deeper than their roots, wider than the heavens, and stronger than all my sin, is the love that grasps me and keeps me and will not let me go, and lavishes its tenderness upon me, and

beseeches me, and pleads with me, and woos me, and rebukes me, and corrects me when I need, and sent his Son to die for me. —Alexander Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

One Reason for Gratitude (671).

Commander Miss Eva Booth recently, in citing the lack of gratitude which permeates the human breast, was explaining that every function enjoyed by the human body is taken as a matter of course, and that no spirit of thankfulness is really ever felt until some organic trouble comes to disturb the physical equilibrium.

"We never appreciate the value of our arms, our feet, our ears, or our eyes until an arm is injured, a foot paralyzed, our hearing becomes defective, or our sight injured. Then we feel exceedingly thankful at the restoration of that organ to its normal basis. I was walking with my father, General Ballington Booth, down a street which ran alongside of a lunatic asylum. Without warning a wild-eyed man seized my father's coat-sleeve.

"'Sir,' he said, 'did you ever realize what a blessing you have in a sound, well-balanced intellect?'

"'Well, I do not know that I ever stopped to think of it,' said the general.

"'Then get down on your knees and thank God for it now,' replied the lunatic, who was temporarily enjoying a certain degree of rationality."

Miss Booth explained that her father offered a prayer of gratitude then and there, while the lunatic lapsed into a stage of hopeless, raging idiocy.—Homiletic Review.

Practical Gratitude (672).

Rohese, the mother of Thomas à Becket, was a very devout woman in her day. It was her custom to weigh her boy every year on his birthday, against money, clothes, and provisions, which she gave to the poor.

Simple Blessings (673).

A night's sleep, what a miracle of mercy it is; and a new day and the waking up with health to face it; aye, even a pleasant meal with one's household, is not that worth a thanksgiving? Or, an interesting book, an hour with an old friend, a Sunday's quiet resting after a strained and weary week, or some new light

of interest or meaning in one's favorite line of study—it is such things as these, far more than great special blessings, which make up the sum of happy life; and it is such things, if one would but think of them more, and not be always taking them as a matter of course, which would fill our days with thanksgivings.—Brooke Herford.

Thanksgiving (674).

For morning sun and evening dew,
For every bud that April knew,
For storm and silence, gloom and light,
And for the solemn stars at night;
For fallow field and burdened byre,
For roof-tree and the hearth-side fire;
For everything that shines and sings,
For dear, familiar daily things—
The friendly trees, and in the sky
The white cloud-squadrons sailing by;
For hope that waits, for faith that dares,
For patience that still smiles and bears,
For love that fails not, nor withstands;
For healing touch of children's hands,
For happy labor, high intent,
For all life's blessed sacrament,
O Comrade of our nights and days,
Thou givest all things, take our praise!

—Arthur Ketchum.

The Heart's Utterance (675).

Majesty and tenderness are united in the 103d psalm; like a sublime mountain top, fresh with warm sunset hues. It has comforted and blessed innumerable souls. There was Robert Sanderson, Bishop of Lincoln, a holy man who left large traces of his scholarship, piety and wisdom on the Prayer Book of the Church of England; he was imprisoned by the Parliament men (persecution has not all been on one side). During the day and night while he was dying he repeated this Psalm over and over. The Scotch Covenanters always chanted it at the Sacrament. The records of the Scotch churches tell many stories like that of Elizabeth Adamson, whose soul was in agony of conviction of sin for many days under the preaching of John Knox, and who found peace when this Psalm was chanted at the Sacrament service, and repeated it over and over when she was dying.

A Memorial Monument (676).

The eastern gate of the restored temple was called the Shushan Gate, and had on it a sculpture of the city of Susa, in grateful commemoration of the issuing of the decree from that city, which permitted the return of captive Israel.

Our Debt to the Past (677).

There is no period so ancient, no country so remote, that it could be cancelled without producing a present shock. One layer of time has Providence piled upon another for immemorial ages; we that live stand now upon this "great mountain of the Lord." God has stationed us at the intersecting line between the known and the unknown; He has planted us on a floating island of mystery, from which we survey the expanse behind in the clear light of experience and truth, and cleave the waves, invisible, yet ever breaking, of the unbounded future. Our very progress, which is our peculiar glory, consists in at once losing and learning the past, in gaining fresh stations from which to take a wider retrospect, and become more deeply aware of the treasures we have used. We are never so conscious of the succession of blessings which God's providence has heaped on us as when lamenting the lapse of years, and are richest in the fruits of time when mourning that time steals those fruits away.—Martineau.

The Language of the Heart (678).

"Yes," she answered, lifting her eyes to his face; "I, too, have felt it, Hermas, this burden, this need, this unsatisfied longing. I think I know what it means. It is gratitude—the language of the heart, the music of happiness. There is no perfect joy without gratitude. But we have never learned it, and the want of it troubles us. It is like being dumb with a heart full of love. We must find the word for it, and say it together. Then we shall be perfectly joined in perfect joy."—Henry Van Dyke.

SERVICE XLVII.

Loyalty to the Church.

1 Timothy 3: 15.

"The church of the living God."

Lesson:—Revelation 3: 7-13.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Christ established the church.**
2. **We owe it loyalty and service.**
3. We may meet our **obligation** by
   - (1) **Union** with it.
   - (2) **Attendance.**
   - (3) **Work.**
   - (4) **Support.**

"If all the members
Were just like me,
What kind of a church
Would my church be?"

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Your Church. (679)—Be true to your own church. Give it a hearty and loyal support by word and deed. Remember that it belongs to you; that it is part of your religious life; that in it and by it you are being trained for usefulness here and immortality hereafter; that its honor is much in your keeping; that its growth and purity are affected to the extent of your influence by what you say and do; that people who have faith in your word will look upon it largely according to representation; and that with its good name and prosperity are bound up the glory of the blessed Jesus. Then do nothing to injure its reputation, or to weaken its power for good or to mar its fellowship.—Herald and Presbyter.

God's School. (680)—The church is a place where the ignorant are being taught. It is God's great school for the development of Christian character. It is God's great hospital where the sin-sick shall be restored to health, and we will allow no committee to stand at the door and exclude any applicants who have "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins."

Of course, it must be understood that those who make application for membership in the church must give some substantial evidence that they have this desire.

The mission of the church is to take such candidates for "glory, honor, and immortality," and patiently, lovingly, kindly train them, and teach them, and bear with their imperfections. —Rev. Robert Forbes, D. D.

Engagement With Christ. (681)—As a member of a church, be loyal to it at all times and under all circumstances. Let each of its services of worship, preaching, teaching, prayer, social fellowship and what-not constitute for you a "standing engagement" with him who is its Head, taking precedence over all else. Be always in your place, rain or shine, hot or cold, as one of the faithful ones upon whose presence your often perplexed and heartworn pastor can depend. Regular attendance is a sure means of your own spiritual development and a positive contribution to the welfare of the church. To your faithful presence at its services add your constant praying for its advancement, your willing performance of every possible work for its upbuilding, and your generous, grateful-hearted paying of money for its expenses, and you will find in church-membership a sure means of growth in grace.—F. G. Cressey, D. D.

Church Judged by its Members. (682)—The church at any given point, or place, is no better nor worse than the members who compose the church, make it. In other words, the church is just what its members are. If the church is in disrepute, it is because its members have made it so, by disreputable conduct. The church as it was in the beginning, and the church as described and presented to us in the New Testament, is all right now, if men who compose the church would live according to the rules designed for the government of the church. But men will not live right. Hence, the church must suffer on account of evil conduct by its own members. Men can not live as the world lives while members of the church, and expect the church to be exalted in the minds of others.

Judgment at the House of God. (683)—Dr. George F. Pentecost told how a new pastor developed efficiency in a moribund church. First he had gone to work systematically to inquire into the lives and habits of a goodly number of members who had lapsed into worldliness and wickedness. These he visited and labored with in every way in his power, seeking to

reclaim them to God; but where they were incorrigibly wedded to sin and a scandalous life, he had them dealt with according to the New Testament law of church discipline, and excluded from membership. Then he began with those who had a name to live, but were dead—the formal but unspiritual portion of his church, whose only sign of life was their more or less regular attendance upon the Sunday morning preaching service. These he sought to interest in the life and work of the church. His preaching was faithful and kind, full of the love of Christ, but which pressed the obligation of fruit-bearing and service upon those who had taken upon them the covenant of life and work when they united with the church. A few of them he reclaimed or won to an earnest Christian life; but many of them were offended and either dropped out of all fellowship with the church or took their letters and went to other churches where they might still go through the forms of godliness without being required to give evidence of power. Thus he purged his church of the rotten branches and cut away the fruitless boughs. Then the remainder of the church began to bear fruit; and in the third year of his pastorate the ingathering of souls came. Not a few of those who came weeping to the feet of Christ were those who had first been driven away by the pastor's faithfulness; but the great bulk of the converts were from among the non-churchgoing class who had been convinced of the reality of religion by what they now saw of the life and work of a church that was in dead earnest for God and the truth. This affords us a practical illustration of how to reach the non-churchgoing masses.

Spiritual Exercise. (684)—There is a valuable form of spiritual exercise, commonly called personal work. There is nothing more necessary for the advancement of the kingdom of God or for the development of your new life than this much-neglected "individual work for individuals." There are three requisites for doing this work: a personal experience or Christ's love, a personal knowledge of the principal truths about sin and salvation, and a personal love for souls. Each of these you already have, or ought to, and if not, may have if you will. If you are lacking in any of them study John's Gospel afresh; there is no better handbook for the personal worker. There is no surer way of developing your own new life than by trying to induce others to accept the same gift.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Troublesome Members (685).

Sometimes it is hard to decide which is the greater trial, the church member who will not do anything at all or the one who is forever pressing some incidental or subordinate activity as if it were the only thing for which the organized churches exist. There are many people who seem not to belong to the church but to the Sabbath-school or to the missionary society. There are others who have but little use for the church except to promote the work of temperance, or who think of the League as the center around which everything revolves. The church is more than any of these, its subsidiary forms of activity. And its main business is to bring human souls into subjection to a divine Lord.—The Christian Advocate.

Worship (686).

Some natives of Tankey, on the island of Madagascar, had heard the word "praying," and knew that those who did that met in one place. They had no missionary, and no one was able to read, so they bought a New Testament, and every Sunday gathered at a house, placed the Testament on the table, and sat for awhile in silence. Then a man arose and said, "Have all come from the north?" "Aye," ws the answer. "Have all come from the south?" "Aye." "Have all come from the east and west?" "Aye." "Then let us break up, for we have all done our duty; but be sure and come early next Sunday." While they were thus praying thousands of lips in Christian nations were praying "Thy kingdom come." Which was the truest praying? Which were doing their duty? Christians surrounded by all the blessings of civilization, having in their power wealth enough to Christianize every island on the globe, or those heathen natives of Tankey, without a single blessing of civilization, except a Bible, which no one could read?—Record of Christian Work.

Church Going (687).

There is one hour in the week which is of far higher value than all other hours and which gives added value to all others. This is the hour of worship on the Sabbath. This is the hour of moral awakening, when we take the sun, "get our bearings" and find our way back to the highway of the sea, if we have been driven from the course of righteousness. In this hour we set our consciences right by the chronometer of truth, cleanse

our hearts, discover error, strengthen volition, and purify motive. Then with the dawn of a new day we pursue life's duties with a noble purpose, a true perspective and divine ideals, and approximate the fulfillment of the great moral mission of life.—Charles C. Earle.

Whole Hearted Loyalty (688).

When the Japanese embraces Christianity he does it as thoughtfully and as thoroughly as he does everything else; he brings to it an imaginative penetration which is not always found in other nations.

When Bishop Brent was visiting in Japan he was asked to officiate at a baptism of Japanese converts. There were three people who desired to be baptized. The first to come forward was an old, old man.

"What is your name?" asked the bishop.

And the old man answered, "Simeon," and then he smiled and added, "For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."

The second man was young and strong.

"The name?" said the bishop.

"Cornelius," the young man answered.

And the bishop, looking on him in his youth and enthusiasm, understood why he had chosen the name of the centurion, that "just man," whom Peter baptized in Caesarea so long ago. "Of a truth . . . God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

The third to come to the font was a child; a little lad ten years old, clinging to his father's hand.

"The name of the child?" asked the bishop.

And the father answered, "His name is Isaac. I give him to the Lord."

And the bishop marveled at the wisdom and simplicity and reverent understanding of this people.—Youth's Companion.

Be Loyal (689).

With all its imperfection the church is still a divinely-ordained institution, the best in the world for fostering spiritual growth. Every Christian ought to belong to some church, and that the one which he believes, after careful study, to be most in accord with the fundamental principles of New Testament faith and practice. The boasted breadth which regards all

churches as equally good is commonly due to ignorance of any. It is possible to be so very broad as to be also very thin. Join a church by all means, and by being inside do all you can for its betterment, rather than stay outside and criticise. Anybody can find fault, for that takes only breath; betterment takes blood and treasure, but infinitely repays the cost to the spender.—F. G. Cressey, D. D.

The Mark of the Disciple (691).

This is a mark of true discipleship. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." Be it yours to promote the spirit of love by the display of a loving and an affectionate disposition. I would not be the man to disturb the harmony of a church of Christ, for the globe upon which I stand. Woe to the man by whom such offences come! There are persons who are very sensitive and suspicious, and are constantly taking offence at their brethren where no offence was intended. They will say harsh and bitter things, but do not you imitate them, nor contend with them. It takes two to make a quarrel, and by showing them a more excellent way, you may win them to a more lovely spirit. "Ye who are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness."—Robert Boyd.

Worship (692).

Mr. Gladstone used to go to church twice on Sunday when he was a very old man. When some one asked him how he could endure such stupid preaching so often, he said in substance this: "I do not feel called upon to hear all the sermon, and do not always hear it. If it is not interesting nor edifying, I fix my mind on some devotional thought at the beginning, and dwell upon it until my soul is lifted up in holy meditation and thanksgiving, and it is always profitable for me to be in the house of the Lord."

Public worship is profitable. It is well for a Christian to sing praises unto the Lord alone, but it is well also to meet together with the great congregation and unite with them in one grand song of praise. It is well to pray alone, but this is not enough. There is need to meet together and unite in one common prayer to God the Father for his mercy and his grace. "O magnify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together." —Christian Advocate.

SERVICE XLVIII.

The Indwelling Spirit.

John 14:26.

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

Lesson:—John 16:7-14.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. The believer is a temple **indwelt by the Holy Spirit.**
2. **He is our divine Teacher,** instructing us in the truths of (1) Salvation, (2) Sanctification, (3) Service.
3. We should be **receptive pupils** in his school.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

The Comforter. (693)—Oh! blessed news, that God himself is the Comforter! Blessed news, that He who strikes will also heal; that He who gives the cup of sorrow, will also give the strength to drink it. Blessed news that chastisement is not punishment. Blessed news, that our whole duty is the duty of a child—that in Christ we are the children of God. Blessed, too, to find that in this power of the Divine Majesty we can acknowledge the unity and know and feel that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are One. Their glory equal, their majesty coeternal; whose justice is mercy; whose power is goodness; its very sternness love, love which gives hope and counsel, help and strength, and the true life which this world's death cannot destroy. This is "the Comforter which shall abide with us for ever."—Charles Kingsley.

Quench Not the Spirit. (694)—Whatever obstructs or disparages His work in the souls of men—whether in others, or in ourselves is thus forbidden. It is a strange and awful, but very real power that we have to "resist the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:51). Since He may be "quenched." He is a fire, as appeared on the Day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 3). This emblem sets forth the sudden and vehement activities of the Holy Spirit, with his gifts of warmth for the heart and light for the mind and his power to kindle the human spirit. Prophecy exhibited his presence under this aspect, in its intensity and ardor. On the

other hand, he appears in gentler form under the emblem of the dove, in whose guise the Spirit descended on Jesas at his baptism.—G. G. Findlay.

Makes Christians Fearless. (695)—"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled" (Acts 4:13). Ideas will never save a man. Nor did the resurrection change the disposition or temper of these men. Even after the resurrection they were timid. They hid themselves away in a room, locked the doors and bolted them. Every creak alarmed them, every footfall made them afraid, joy is a stranger to their hearts, courage they have not yet learned. But on the day of Pentecost something happens. Somebody comes. The Holy Spirit baptizes them with a new power. Instantly the doors are thrown open, and Simon Peter stands up in the presence of a great crowd defending himself and the men who stand behind him, and explaining the cause of their tumultuous joy.—Charles E. Jefferson.

No Effectual Work without Spirit. (696)—Jesus taught distinctly that the Christian should have the co-operation of the Holy Spirit in witnessing for Christ. The Spirit is to convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. There is all the difference in the world between preaching in the power of the Holy Spirit and simply in the power of one's natural ability. Preaching without the power of the Holy Spirit is like shooting with a bow and arrow. The strength that sends the arrow rests simply in the arm and the bow. But preaching Christ in the power of the Spirit is like shooting with the latest improved rifle. The power that sends the bullet rests in the powder that is set on fire behind it. You simply pull the trigger and the fire and powder do the rest.

The Spirit for Today. (697)—God does not give the Holy Spirit at one time in such power that we can forever afterward dispense with its presence and purifying power. We must be renewed day by day in the inner man. The mission of the Spirit is that he may abide with us forever. For we need daily cleansing. In the daily cleansing of the heart there must be a willingness to take life's experiences as God sends them. It is easy to be lovely when every experience is pleasing. But it is not easy to keep a sweet temper and an equable spirit when experiences are harsh and disappointing and painful. The Holy Spirit's

presence is given just for such needs as this. He will help us to keep a happy heart and will cleanse away complaining and discontent.

Joy of Work With the Spirit. (698)—The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of joy. He is the Comforter. He is the author of peace. He gives to the soul an understanding of the only real happiness of which it is capable. The Christian then should be happy. Attaining to happiness brings him into sympathy with the Spirit. Not indeed that happiness which is found in fleeting pleasures, but that which is in the grand activities of the Christian's contest and the Christian's victory. The joy of the Lord is our strength in doing the work of the Lord. This is amply illustrated in the lives of the most successful Christian workers. They are as happy as they are earnest. They are thus one with the Spirit, and the work of the Spirit is done by them. Would we be workers together with God?—J. Otis Burrows, D. D.

Corrects Our Errors. (699)—S. D. Gordon thus illustrates the meaning of Comforter and His method: "Here is a boy in school, head down, puzzling over a 'sum.' It won't 'come out.' He figures away, and his brow is all knotted up, and a worried look is coming into his face, for he is a conscientious little fellow. But he cannot seem to get it right, and the clouds gather thicker. By and by the teacher comes and sits down by his side. It awes him a little to have her quite so close. But her kindness of manner mellows the awe. 'How are you getting along?' 'Won't come out right,' in a very despondent tone. 'Let me see —did you subtract that——?' 'Oh-h-h! I forgot that,' and a little light sems to break, as he scratches away for a few moments; then pauses. 'And this figure here, should it be——?' 'Oh-h-h, I see.' More scratching, and a soft sigh of relief, and the knitting brows unravel, and the face brightens. The teacher did not do the problem for him. She did better. She let him feel her kindly interest, first of all, and gave just the light, experienced touch that showed him the way out, and yet allowed him the peculiar pleasure of getting through himself. That is what 'Comforter' means."

The Day of the Spirit. (700)—Where it is said that the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us (Rom. 8:26), it is plain from the context that to the receptive and responsive soul there is guidance as to what to pray for, as well as the promise of an answer to the prayer of faith. Let us remember in this connec-

tion that this is the spiritual, the pentecostal dispensation. There is no provision for an anti-climax in this gospel except that which results from lack of faith.—Bishop O. P. Fitzgerald.

Power of Spirit. (701)—I believe in the Holy Spirit. To adopt another thought: I expect to see saints as holy as any named in the Bible, because I believe in the Holy Spirit. I expect to see preachers as mighty in the Scriptures and to sway men as ever shook the multitudes of Jerusalem, or Antioch, or Corinth, or Rome, because I believe in the Holy Spirit. I expect to see churches as full of the works of faith and the labors of love as ever Thessalonica was, because I believe in the Holy Spirit. I expect to see towns and cities swept from side to side, and from highest to lowest extremes of society, until righteousness shall reign in the streets, because I believe in the Holy Spirit. I expect to see the dark regions of the earth clothed with light, and the waste places blossom as the rose, because I believe in the Holy Spirit. I expect to see the day when another Julian shall declare, "Behold, how these Christians love one another," because I believe in the Holy Spirit.—Albert G. Lawson, D. D.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Grieving the Spirit (702).

An old man once said to his pastor: "When I was seventeen I began to feel deeply at times, and this continued for two or three years, but I determined to put it off till I should be settled in life. After I was married I reflected that the time had come when I had promised to attend to religion, but I had bought this farm and I thought it would not suit me to become religious till it was paid for, as some time would have to be devoted to attend church and also some expense. I then resolved to put it off ten years, but when the ten years came round I thought no more about it. I often try to think but I cannot keep my mind on the subject one moment."

The pastor urged him by all the terrors of dying an enemy of God to set about the work of repentance.

"It is too late," said he, "I believe my doom is sealed, and it is just that it should be so, for the Spirit strove long with me but I refused."

The pastor turned to his children, young men and young women, who were around him, and entreated them not to put

off the subject of religion or grieve the Spirit of God in their youthful days.

The old man added: "Mind that, if I had attended to it then it would have been well with me today, but now it is too late."—Baxendale's Dictionary of Religious Anecdote.

Available But Unclaimed Power (703).

One of the bank buildings in Albany, New York, has been erected by using unclaimed deposits; there is enough of an unclaimed spiritual deposit for every Christian to make him rich for time and eternity. Let us keep appropriating that which is ours. Since the day of Pentecost we have been living in a stream of spiritual power, and all that is required, if we should be filled to overflowing, is that we should dip up and drink of that river which flows from the throne of God. There is no more electricity in the world today than a thousand years ago. The difference is that we of today appropriate that which has all the time been round about us. There is no more electricity in America than in Africa. The difference is that we have taken hold of it and made it light our streets and carry us to and from our homes, while in the heart of Africa they sit in darkness and plod wearily over mountain and valley. It is a principle of science that if one would command a force he must obey the law of it. It is a principle in our Christian religion that if one would command all the power of God he needs simply to obey the laws of God.—Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman.

Wesley's Power (704).

And look at Wesley; always thoughtful, serious, sad, and pious; but without the testimony of the Spirit. He wishes for relief to his burdened heart. A humble German points him to Christ, and for awhile he hesitates, but at length he is convinced; and seeks Him only with all his heart. He rises in the morning early, and takes up his Bible, which informs him that he is not far from the kingdom of God. He listens to his Church declaring that with God is the forgiveness of sins. He hears Luther's testimony, now more than a century old, and he believes it. The Holy Ghost comes upon him. He feels his heart strangely warmed. He has been baptized with fire; and immediately he becomes a witness of the power of God, and for more than half a century testifies to the power of grace. "And being dead, he yet speaketh."—Anderson.

Hadley's Helper (705).

A poor, miserable drunkard in the city of New York began to think, and the Holy Spirit seized the opportunity to put him under powerful conviction. He tells his story as follows: "I was sitting on a whisky barrel for perhaps two hours, when all of a sudden I seemed to feel some great and mighty presence. I did not then know what it was. Never until my dying day will I forget the sight presented to my horrified gaze. My sins appeared to creep along the wall in letters of fire. I turned and looked in another direction and there I saw them again. I have always believed I got a view of eternity right there in that gin mill. It filled me with unspeakable terror." The "admonishing Spirit" never left him until a few days later his soul was set at liberty down at the old Water Street Mission. This was the late S. H. Hadley, who conducted the Water Street Mission for years and was instrumental in leading thousands to Christ.—"The Holy Spirit Our Helper."

The Comforter (706).

A writer in "Sunday-School Times" says: While traveling a few months ago I saw a little blind girl come into the car. She was not more than seven or eight years old, and had a very bright face. She had been attending a school for the blind and was on her way home, yet no friend or relative was with her. You ask how she could travel alone? Very well, indeed, for she was put in charge of the conductor, a kind-hearted man, who lived in the same town she did. When he was not engaged in collecting tickets he sat by her side and talked with her.

My Friend (707).

One summer a friend suggested my spending a week on Lake Chautauqua. I did not have the money to spare, and so I told him I was not sure I could arrange to get away. But he seemed to divine the basis of my objection, and insisted on my going along. We went. I had very little money with me. I got on the train without a ticket, took a seat in the parlor-car, stopped at the best hotel, had a choice room on the ground floor, patronized the well-ordered dining-room regularly, and made free use of the place. And all the time I had practically no money with me. But would you believe me, I was not a particle concerned about paying for these privileges. Never felt less concern about anything in my life. You know why.—Gordon.

SERVICE XLIX.

Cheerful Christians.

Matthew 14: 27.

"Be of good cheer; it is I, be not afraid."

Lesson:—Psalms 66.

1. **Christ's loving presence** is the guaranty of all good and against all evil.

2. The knowledge of this should **banish all fear and doubt.**

3. **The normal Christian is the cheerful Christian.** No one has such reason for gladness.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Cheerful Without Folly. (708)—Christian cheerfulness is not frivolity. A frivolous spirit can not be too severely condemned. Sinful mirth is as far from Christian cheerfulness as midnight is from noonday. There is a laughter which is neither seemly nor wholesome. The wise man says, "As the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of a fool."

Christian cheerfulness does not exclude seriousness. While the Christian is cheerful, he is also sober-minded. He contemplates the great things, considers the awful things, and reflects on the serious things of life and the universe. It does not exclude sympathy and pity. Let no one imagine that it is necessary to avoid the house of mourning in order to be cheerful. We need not smother our pity that we may cultivate our joy. Cheerfulness does not detract from the genuineness and value of sympathy in the least; but, on the contrary, it enhances them. The sympathy of a bright and happy spirit is more beautiful and more effectual than the sympathy of a gloomy soul. If you were passing through deep waters of tribulation you would not value the conversation of a long-faced, sad-voiced, melancholy man; but you would appreciate a call from a man whose heart and face were beaming with joy.

Work! Don't Worry. (709)—We cannot stand the strain of both work and worry. Two things come between our souls and unshadowed fellowship with God, sin and care. And we must be as resolute to cast our care on the Lord as to confess our sins to Him, if we would walk in the light as He is in the light. One

yelping dog may break our slumber on the stillest night. One grain of dust in the eye will render it incapable of enjoying the fairest prospect. One care may break our peace and hide the face of God, and bring a funeral pall over our souls. We must cast all our care on Him, if we would know the blessedness of unshadowed fellowship.—F. B. Meyer.

Secure in Christ. (710)—Christ's care is a guarantee of man's inviolability. "No one shall be able to pluck them out of My hands." Jesus Christ takes hold of his rescued sheep, takes hold of them with the hands which were pierced on their behalf, takes hold of them with a grip that will never ungrasp. There are forces which endeavor to snatch them away, wolves and robbers, the world, the flesh, and the devil, persecution, temptation, and difficulties. But Christ is mightier than them all, and so long as his follower hides in the hollow of his hand, he is absolutely safe.

As a Man Thinketh. (711)—1. To a marked degree our thinking makes our life—our character, our disposition, our moods, our experiences.

2. We can, to a great extent, control and direct our thinking.

3. Let us "think on those things" that will ennoble and gladden our lives.

Cut Our Wants to Fit Our Needs. (712)—We need to learn this secret of full life in Christ in spite of minor deprivations, because we cannot have all the things that we want—even rich men have been known to want more things—and some of us have to do without things which, on the plane of physical life, are quite desirable. If we can gain wealth, it is well to have it, if we receive it as coming from God and use it for his glory; but if we do not possess this wealth, which is the lowest wealth in the gift of God, we are exhorted to earnestly covet the best gifts—that wealth of heart and soul which lies open for the taking to every follower of Christ. Here is wealth worthy of ambition; wealth which is offered freely and without stint; the unsearchable riches of Christ, which will make us wealthy to all eternity. Christ never asks us to do without this wealth, the true riches, but he says, "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you."—Advance.

Anti-Sunshine Society. (713)—There are only two kinds of people in the world—the people who live in the shadow and gloom and those who live on the sunny side of the street. These shadowed ones are sometimes called pessimists; sometimes people of melancholy temperament; sometimes they are called disagreeable people; but, wherever they go, their characteristic is this: their shadow always travels on before them. . . . These people never bear their own burden, but expose all their wounds to others. They are all so busy looking down for pitfalls and sharp stones and thorns on which to step that they do not even know that there are any stars in the sky. These folks live on the wrong side of the street. And yet it is only twenty feet across to the other sidewalk, where sunshine always lies.—Newell Dwight Hillis.

Altruist. (714)—Cheerfulness means courage. It implies manliness and unselfishness. The habitually cheerful man is thinking about his work and about other people; he is not thinking all the time about himself. To think of your work and be happily interested in it, and to think of your fellow-workers and your employers and be happily interested in them—this is a great help to those that seek advancement in life.—Amos R. Wells.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Troubles that Never Come (715).

The story is told in an exchange, of a lady who for a time kept a list of impending troubles. It was a relief to see them down in black and white. Some months later, in looking over the list, she was surprised to find that nine-tenths of these troubles had never materialized. They had an existence only in her imagination.

The troubles that never come form the heaviest part of our daily load. The worry, the fear caused by these apprehended miseries, often work sad havoc with brain and nerves. The actual sorrows, the bereavements, the disappointments, have their comfort and cure. But there is no cure for troubles that never come. They are haunting ghosts, unsubstantial as mist, yet very real in their depressing and harmful power over us.

"Be Of Good Cheer" (716).

When Dr. John Brown, the kindly physician of Edinburgh, lay dying, a lady visited him one Sunday after church, and he

asked her what had been the text. She repeated the words: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

"Wonderful words!" he murmured, and then folding his hands, and closing his eyes, he repeated slowly, "Be of good cheer," and then after a pause, "And from Him, our Saviour."—George Milligan, D. D.

The Tree God Plants (717).

The wind that blows can never kill
  The tree God plants;
It bloweth east, it blowest west;
The tender leaves have little rest.
But any wind that blows is best.
  The tree God plants.
Strikes deeper root, grows higher still,
Spreads wider boughs, for God's good will
  Meets all its wants.

Staff and Cup (718).

Worry.

There's a song to lighten the toil,
  And a staff for climbing the height,
For never an alpenstock
  For the hills that are out of sight.

There are bitter herbs enough
  In the brimming cup of today,
Without the sprig of rue
  From tomorrow's unknown way.

A Hopeful View (719).

God's plan is not so obscured but that his children may catch a glimpse now and then, put in a lever here and there, and turn its stream into new channels. There is much to die for, but more to live for, much to sacrifice, but more to enjoy, if we but humble that pride of which the poet speaks, and share with others the great good which is ours from day to day.

There is an odd reflection of Mrs. Browning's that comes to my mind just now, a few lines from "Aurora Leigh" where that same "Cousin Romney," after failing in his attempt to set

the world right by hurried and unnatural methods, is brought to humility and thus reflects:

"I do but stand and think,
Across dim waters of a troubled life
The Flower of Heaven so vainly overhangs—
What perfect counterpart would be in sight
If tanks were clearer. Let us clean the tubes
And wait for rains."

It is a fitting injunction for all hearts to take—"Let us clean the tubes and wait for rains," patiently wait at times, but always with the belief that God's plan is a good working plan, and faith can do wonders today as in days of old.—Kate Restieaux.

Face the Sunshine (720).

Which way are you facing?

There are many flowers that are more beautiful than the sunflower, and yet there is one thing we always love about this homely plant. It always looks straight up into the light of the sun. Look at it in the morning. Then its bright yellow blossom is lifted toward the east, as if it were waiting for the sunshine to warm it and open its petals a bit wider than they ever have been opened before. As the sun slowly wheels up toward the noonday, and then on down into the western sky, the sunflower keeps turning, turning till at last the hills shut out the light of day, and then it goes to sleep. Life, beauty, glory are in the light of the sun.

Is there not something beautiful for us in the way the sunflower keeps its face always up into the face of the sun?

Happiness Makes Happiness (721).

A woman who has many sorrows and burdens to bear, but who was noted for her cheerful spirit, once said in explanation: "You know I have had no money. I had nothing to give but myself, and so I made the resolution that I would never sadden any one else with my troubles. I have laughed and told jokes when I could have wept. I have always smiled in the face of every misfortune. I have tried never to let any one go from my presence without a happy word or a bright thought to carry with them. And happiness makes happiness. I myself am happier than I would have been had I sat down and bemoaned my fate."—The Wellspring.

SERVICE L.

Our Words.

James 3: 13.

"A good conversation."

Lesson:—James 3.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **Language** is the main method through which **character finds expression.**

2. **Language** is possibly the chief **medium through which** life influences life.

3. We shall be **held accountable** for our words.

4. It is of the utmost importance that our **words be wisely chosen.** They should be (1) **True** words, (2) **Kind,** (3) **Reverent,** (4) **Pure.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Words Like a Brook. (722)—I think no musical instrument in the world is like the utterance of speech in one whose voice is well trained, whose mind is rich with emotion, and who is accustomed to describe in graceful and appropriate language one's own experience in life. The conversation that flows in the quietude of the family, like the tinkling of a brook under the shadow of green trees; the conversation that flows like a river whose banks are efflorescent, and which holds its way deep and tranquil—such conversation may become a habit, not only in the sense o. not being hurtful, but in the sense of having a beauty which is pleasurable.—H. W. Beecher.

Impersonal. (723)—Keep clear of personalities in conversation. Talk of things, objects, thoughts. The smallest minds occupy themselves with persons. Do not needlessly report ill of others. As far as possible, dwell on the good side of human beings. There are family boards where a constant process of depreciating, assigning motives and cutting up character goes forward. They are not pleasant places. One who is healthy does not wish to dine at a dissecting table. There is evil enough in man, God knows. But it is not the mission of every young man and woman to detail and report it all. Keep the atmosphere as pure as possible, and fragrant with gentleness and charity.—John Hall.

Impurity and Profanity. (724)—It is hard to say which is worse, the impure or the profane word. The swearer may often make no impression save for the moment, while the obscene leaves a defiling stain upon the soul that many waters cannot wash out, nor years wear away. As to the foolish talking and jesting one hears everywhere, how can it be else but condemned? It is difficult to draw the line between reasonable and sinful indulgence here. To say that all joking and mirthful jests are wrong is absurd. The quick witted reply, and humorous word, when springing forth kindly and without offense, are enlivening, and the proof of life; but the habitual jester, who bends all his powers to the paltry end of exciting a laugh, is all froth, and healthful for none.

Tongue Inspires Service. (725)—Blessed and honorable is that person whose tongue is obedient to the law of Christ, and whose words are as a spring of wholesome water; who never uses scorn, except to scourge sin, or satire except to prune folly; who never puts the simple to confusion, nor flatters the great; who says no ill of any man except under the last compulsion of truth and justice; who delights to speak well of every man and bids the cast down be of good cheer. This man dispels calumnies, lifts shadows, comforts sorrow, establishes righteousness, lays strife to rest, and brings in the Kingdom of God.

Tongue Taught or Mute (726).

"Oh, ask of heaven to teach thy tongue
A true, a reverent tone;
Full oft attuned to praise and prayer,
And still to vice unknown!
And rather be it mute for aye,
Than yield its music sweet
To malice, scorn, impurity,
To slander or deceit!"

—Mrs. Osgood.

Silence Under Trial. (727)—The grace of silence under trial is one of the most rare and difficult graces; but it is one of the most pleasing to God and most conducive to strength and beauty of Christian character.

None of us loves to suffer, and we all shudder at the sight of the probe or the amputating knife. But when the infinite love is engaged in cutting out a selfish lust or cutting off a diseased limb, our duty is to submit. "Keep still, my friend,"

says the surgeon to the patient in the hospital; "for restlessness may produce false cuts and aggravate the process."

If the brave fellow is wise, he will say: "Doctor, go as deep as you choose; only be sure to fetch out the bullet." Ah, the battlefield often requires less courage than the hospital! The onset of service, with drums beating and bugles sounding, does not so test the metal of our graces as to be thrown down wounded, or to be commanded to lie still and suffer. To shout a battle cry at the mouth of the cannon is easier than to put our hands on our mouths and be silent because "God did it." If he is silent as to explanations of trying providences, let us be silent in our filial submission. God knows what is best for us; that is enough.

"Talking" Against Evil. (728)—Few men suspect how much mere talk fritters away spiritual energy,—that which should be spent in action spends itself in words. The fluent boaster is not the man who is steadiest before the enemy; it is well said to him that his courage is better kept till it is wanted. Loud utterances of virtuous indignation against evil from the platform, or in the drawing-room, do not characterize the spiritual giant; so much indignation as is expressed has found vent, is wasted,—is taken away from the work of coping with evil,—the man has so much less left. And hence he who restrains that love of talk lays up a fund of spiritual strength.—Frederick W. Robertson.

"Is it I?" (729)—"Physician, heal thyself." Keep in mind these words before you speak to or rebuke your neighbor, lest haply, in reproving him indiscreetly or unjustly, you commit a greater fault than his.....Be you patient and merciful to your brother in few things, as God is to you in many things..... Since it is difficult for man in all his words and actions to keep always within the bounds of moderation, and to watch over his soul, hence it is that religious persons love solitude, and seek retreat and silence, to give themselves up to prayer apart from the tumult of the world.—Thomas à Kempis.

Truth the Foundation. (729a)—Paul does not place truthfulness among the Christian graces. No one is expected to exhibit fully the Christian graces of love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, until he has become a Christian, for the fruits of the Spirit, come after the new birth. But truthfulness seems to be deeper and more vital. It ought to come from the first birth. It runs in the

blood. It belongs to a man because he is a man. A man must be truthful to be respectable. Multitudes who do not profess to be Christians are truthful, still the Spirit of God may render a man more sensitive to the shades of the truth. Nothing offends any man more than to call him a liar. If a man is known to be a liar people avoid him, and do not care to have social or business relations with him. It is the glory of true manhood to be truthful. Cicero says it is not virtuous to speak Latin correctly, but disgraceful not to speak it accurately. Truthfulness is so essential to manhood, that a liar is hardly counted a man. He is at such a discount that men will not fraternize with him. The Cretians were proverbially liars, so that other people did not care to have dealings with them.—Johns D. Parks, Ph. D.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Harsh Words (730).

Every one who has read Byron's "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" knows what a terrible piece of satire it is—the most merciless literary flogging since Juvenal scourged Roman vice and folly through the market-place. Pope, "the wicked wasp of Twickenham," could not sting like that in his bitterest mood. Yet what do we find? Some years later Byron expresses regret at having written this crushing criticism of his critics. Embellished as it is with all the dower of his genius, every stanza a stab, every verse filled with venom, it stands condemned by its author as a piece of thoughtless malice, the shadow of his darker self.

Many a petulant word cut deeper than a two-edged sword. Many a frown is bitterer than hemlock to the soul. The thoughtless jest may hide a barbed pang for some one. Your acrid witticisms may be poured upon an open wound. "O keep thy tongue with jealous care!"

A Cure for Bad Tempers (731).

The manager of a large laundry business recently cured two of his men who could never agree with each other on account of their bad tempers. These men's duties caused them to work side by side in the laundry; and, owing to their quarrelsome natures, they were constantly in hot water in more senses than one. At last their employer hit upon the following plan to cure them:—

He put the two men, one inside the building and the other outside, to clean all the windows on the premises. There they were, face to face with each other, without being able to exchange a word. At last the charm began to work, for the whole of the working-people were laughing at them. Noticing this, the two men could not help but smile at each other, and at last broke out into a hearty roar of laughter. The cure was permanent, for they have been good-tempered friends ever since.—Popular Educator.

The Tongue and the Pen (732).

We are never to forget the "tongue" includes the "pen." No creature writes that does not think, and no creature thinks that cannot talk, if its organs be perfect. It is not the mere instrumental tongue or instrumental pen. It is the word. Words are things, as much as bullets and daggers, and often are just as killing. Once, a New York paper gave an account of the terrible fall of a very beautiful woman. There was no reason of justice, or mercy, or public utility, or private help, to be had by publishing the facts, with the names, but they were startlingly sensational. That woman's widowed mother, who, in a distant land, had reared a large family most respectably, whose other children are doing well, received a marked copy of the paper, detailing sickeningly the degradation of her child, and in a day that mother became a lunatic, and a whole circle were made to suffer under the redoubled blows of the affliction. The reporter who caught up that morsel of scandal, and the publisher of that paper who unnecessarily paraded it to the world, and the person who sent that marked copy to the poor mother, are guilty before God for that old lady's lunacy and the many heartbreaks that followed.—Deems.

The Value of Wise Words (733).

Abraham Lincoln said, at Gettysburg, that the world would not long remember what was said there, but it would never forget what was done there. What Lincoln said there is likely to be remembered when the memory of the battle itself is merged in that of a thousand other battles, and indeed only retains its place in public recollection for what Lincoln said. Eternal truth expressed in noble words is the nearest thing to immortality which poor humanity has produced, and the inspiration of Lincoln's words, in spite of his modesty, must always be a national asset of enormous value.—Wall Street Journal.

SERVICE LI.

"God's Unspeakable Gift."

A Christmas Meditation.

Luke 2:11.

"For unto you is born . . . a Saviour."

Lesson:—Luke 2:8-17.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **God is Love.**
2. God's **love found supreme expression** in the unspeakable gift of a **Saviour.**
3. **All other good gifts** are included in this one.
4. We should **accept this Gift** with glad **Gratitude.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Bethlehem. (735)—Bethlehem! Why, this is the beginning of everything! This is the dawn of history, the fountainhead of learning, the germ of all faith and hope and trust. We thought Egypt was the oldest country on earth. But we really didn't know anything about it. We had to take somebody's word for all that. But Bethlehem we know. This little city we can remember. Canaan and Egypt came later; Eden was in a subsequent chapter; Jacob and Joseph, Moses and Joshua, Samson and David—we learned of them afterward.

But the story of Bethlehem was the first. It preceeded all history and parable. It was the corner-stone of all teaching. And always the tender story came from the lips of the same teacher. No matter who says "Bethlehem" in tones ever so harsh and strident, a man can always hear his mother's voice repeating the story of that wonderful night, the crowded inn and the manger, the watching shepherds, and the glorious voices of the shining hosts, and "the little baby" in the manger. If I tried, I could not describe to you the "Church of the Nativity," because I forgot it and its wretched and grotesque absurdities of unholy frauds as fast as I looked at them, and did not look at them long enough to obscure the real Bethlehem—the one you and I saw when we were children—the Bethlehem that we know so well.—Robert J. Burdette.

Christmas All the Year. 736)—Christmas is a day of joy, but joy should not be allowed to die out of our lives next morning. It should stay with us ever after. We should sing the Christmas songs all the new year. We should carry the peace of God in our hearts continually hereafter. We should learn from this time to find the beauty and the good in all things and to show the world that we believe what we say we believe—that since God loves us and Jesus Christ is our friend, "all's well with the world."

Giving Self. (737)—Lift up yourselves to the great meaning of the day, and dare to think of your humanity as something so sublimely precious that it is worthy of being made an offering to God. Count it a privilege to make that offering as complete as possible, keeping nothing back, and then go out to the pleasures and duties of your life, having been truly born anew into his divinity, as he was born into our humanity on Christmas day.—Phillips Brooks.

Giving God-like. (738)—The most Godlike thing the soul can do is to give. Giving is the constant activity of God. The whole material fabric is an expression of his delight in giving. The crowning manifestation of it is the gift of Jesus. Were God to cease to give, he would cease to be what he is. God is love and love is the constant outpouring of itself for others. The chief delight of our heavenly Father is to lavish his gifts upon us, and chiefest among them is the gift of himself to us. This is "the unspeakable gift."

The truth of our title receives large endorsement at this season, marked by generosity. Pleasant as it is to receive tokens of regard from others—and there is a blessedness in receiving—it is as nothing compared with the joy of giving. Our gifts bring a harvest of pleasure just in proportion as we put ourselves into them. When they have called forth thought and care and sacrifice, they are not only more welcome to the receiver, but reflect a deeper joy in the heart of the giver.

The greatest of all gifts that the soul can make is the consecration of itself to Jesus. To consecrate one's self includes the consecration of one's all. But this consecration has its outward manifestations. It longs to express itself, and in deeds, as well as words and emotions, find its delight. Oh! that it could do something for him it loves. It can. Jesus is here in the presence

of the sick, the prisoner, the hungry, the thirsty and the naked. Deeds done for such are done for him. In them he is sick and in prison, he is hungry, thirsty and naked.

And Christmas is his birthday, and can only be fittingly celebrated in giving to him. While the season softens our hearts and the face of the Christ-Child sweetly haunts us everywhere, let us offer unto him in these his "brethren" our gifts of love and cheer. Thus shall we keep the feast.—The Episcopal Recorder.

Doing Jesus' Work (739).

For we know the Christmas spirit
Urges all to deeds of love;
So, once sang the Bethlehem angels,
Coming down from realms above;
Gathered 'round the Bethlehem cradle,
And while we are singing there,
Make a worthy resolution,
In this blessed work to share.

Christmas Milestones. (740)—Each Christmas is like the passing of a mile-stone of life. There is much work for myself to do, there is much work for others to be done. The Christmas message is one as to the need of haste. "The night cometh when no man can work." We pass the years as an express train glides by telegraph poles. When each one is passed, it lies back beyond recall. It is the same with the opportunities, we let slip. The Christmas season tells us of neglected opportunities and urges the importance of faithfulness in the future.—Rev. G. B. F. Hallock, D. D.

Forgetting the Past. (741)—Kings worship the Child. Kings bring presents and bow at the manger. All-wise men offer gifts. The hearts of the fathers are turned to the children. The wild beasts of the earth lie down in peace together, for the little Child at last is leading them. Bethlehem tells us: Forget the old, the past, the darkness; for the new life is before us.—Rev. W. S. Sayres, in Detroit Free Press.

Christmas Cheer to non-Christians. (742)—The true Christian not only keeps Christmas Day sacred as the most religious of feast days, but he will do all in his power to help others to keep it sacred. There are in every community, in every neighborhood, friendless persons. They may be strangers far from home, alone and lonely; or they may be persons whom fate seems

to have marked for misfortune. The very happiness depicted in the faces all about them may make their own loneliness so much the more despairing. These, ye Christian friends, are, on Christmas Day, the ones whom God expects you to save for him. Give a brother's hand to these. Let them feel that Christmas Day is theirs to enjoy as well as it is yours. Be a true friend to at least one such person, in honor of the day. Take him, if need be, into your very home and make him happy. Let him feel that you put yourself along with him in that brotherhood of love of which the Christ Child is the Supreme Master, loving him no less than he loves you. Make as many happy as you can on Christmas Day. Thus you will be celebrating Christmas Day rightly.

Peace on Earth. (743)—"Joy to the world! the Lord is come," is the triumphant strain that echoes through church aisles and lifts its choral harmony from home altars. Under the spell of the Christmas gladness under the guidance of the star, we are happy with our neighbors, our friends and our children. There is a pulse of gladness in the world. Every one feels it, even the most desolate and most forlorn acknowledge it and are cheered. For unto us is born a Saviour, and his name is Jesus, and he shall save his people from their sins. Ages may yet pass before his reign of peace shall everywhere be established; but the day of his full ascendency over every island and continent is speeding on, and the Christmastide shall finally come, when the star shall shine over an earth swept clean and white, and from shore to shore, under the complete sway of him who bore our sins in his own body on the tree and who now sits at the right hand of God for evermore.

Universal Christmas (744).

My gladdest thought for Christmas-tide
Is that the love of God so wide,
Taking the whole world in its thought
And giving all that Christ has brought,
Can enter, fill and use each heart
That wishes thus to have a part
In ministry of love to bring
The world to God through Christ our King.

Good-will. (745)—The dominant note of the Christian time is good will. The angels sang it on the first Christmas night, and thence it passed into the song of the world and has swelled

into larger and richer volume with each returning year. Christ himself is the highest and fullest expression of God's good will to men. In giving his Son to the world God gave it his best gift, one that carries with it all the blossoms and fruit of the apple tree. This spirit of good will that flows down from God through Christ upon men is to be diffused among men until it floods and saturates the world.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The World's Conqueror (746).

The Babe of Bethlehem has become the conqueror of man. The rapturous utterance of the old prophet, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." All the world lies in subjection before him; all the activities of man pay tribute to him. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords. Ever since that hour of holy calm when the morning stars sang together, music has made him the subject of its sweetest and noblest songs. His coming gave a new impulse and direction to art, and the greatest masters have vied with each other in doing honor to the holy child, Jesus. Poets have turned their harps to holier strains, and have dedicated the best children of their genius to the "One altogether lovely and the chiefest among ten thousand."

But by what means does this conqueror subdue the world? Alexander, Tamerlane, Caesar, Napoleon were triumphant through physical force. The sword, the catapult, the fire-brand, and all the devices of cruel, barbaric war secured for them temporary power over men. They conquered to subjugate. Christ makes his conquests by means of a subtler, stronger, nobler power than mere physical force. The emblem of his conquest is not the sword, but the olive branch. He is not the demon of war, but the Prince of Peace. He conquers to exalt. He makes men captive through love. This is a force more potent than regiments or squadrons of battleships.—W. R. Maxfield.

The Melody of Christmastide (747).

The world may be white with winter, the winds rave, and the storms beat, but nothing in the chill and stress of outside weather, on sea or land, can eclipse the brightness of Christmas. It is the

season of mirth and feasting, the season for the gladness of the little ones and the joy of their parents. True, there are minor notes in the song here and there. If there has been a break in the circle of loved ones during the year, a hush may fall temporarily upon the melody of Christmastide. If there is anxiety about one whose strength is failing and whose chair may soon be vacant, the song loses something of its jubilance. Yet, as someone has truly said, "When the song goes out of a life, it may be replaced by a psalm." When the burnt sacrifice was laid on the altar in the olden dispensation, the choir began its anthem of rejoicing. Christmas is a time of song around the globe. In the great cathedrals of Europe, in obscure parish churches hidden away among New England hills, in meeting places on the frontier, in rooms set apart for worship where there is no sacred edifice, and in homes without number, the Christmas song ascends.—Margaret E. Sangster, in American Missions.

A Christmas Wish (748).

A Christmas that put first things first, spirit before symbol and Christ before Santa Claus; that hallows the home and transfigures the face and consecrates both self and pocketbook to the loving service of others; a Christmas that through its great good tidings brings strength to bear our burdens, balm to soothe our sorrow, inspiration to glorify our labor and poise for our sometimes harassed souls; a Christmas that reminds us of the beautiful old stories of the Magi and the shepherds and the choir of angels, and that transforms our hearts into living mangers, cradling anew the eternal inexhaustible, Christ-begetting, world-transforming love-spirit of the Father—may this Christmas, good friends—this merry, blessed Christ-filled Christmas—be yours! —Henry Hallam Tweedy.

A Christmas Thought (749).

The shepherds at once recognized that the message the angel had just given them was from the Lord. Moreover, they implicitly believed it, and hastened to find the infant Jesus. Simple faith has its reward.

It is just as simple a matter for any unsaved person to find his Redeemer—hear and believe the message, then hasten to find Christ, who waits to welcome.

The Christmas Letter (750).

When Christmas approaches, we all think about presents. Many of us have not very much to give. Many do not care for presents of the ordinary kind. We are satisfied with our possessions. What everyone values in a present is its fitness, the kind thought of remembrance which it embodies. Why should we not this Christmas send out a batch of kind, affectionate and encouraging letters? This, at least, is within the power of all of us; and who knows what happiness we might not give, what cheer, what strength, what hope? We can call to mind by a little thinking friends and acquaintances with whom life has passed but roughly during the year. Write to the friend far away who is fighting a hard battle, and tell him what you think of his constancy. Write to the sick friend who fancies herself no use in the world, and tell her that her life matters much to you. Write to the author whose book you have liked. Send no advice—there is a great deal too much advice in the world—send encouragement, words of recognition, of gratitude, of affection, of admiration; and send such words especially to those who are living through a time of great stress and trial. Your letter may decide the issue of the conflict. * * * In the life of Hugh Price Hughes we are told that he kept very few letters, but in searching through his desk his wife came upon one from Dr. Jenkins. Mr. Hughes, after a fierce controversy, sent in his resignation to the president of his Church. Dr. Jenkins wrote an affectionate and earnest dissuasion, begging him not to take that step. Very likely this letter meant more to Mr. Hughes than any of the costly gifts he received and deserved. If I were to covet any honor of authorship, it would be this—that some letters of mine might be found in the desks of my friends when their life struggle is ended.—W. Robertson Nicoll.

The Gifts' Significance (751).

These Christmas Presents that pass from land to land—what are they but copies of the gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh which the magi laid at the Child Redeemer's feet? With the presents, then, let the higher thought be intertwined that God's best gift to man was his Son, born to take away sin and misery; that man's best gift to his brother man is a prayer for the importation from heaven of the almighty grace of this Son

to transform the recipient into a renewed image of God and an heir of immortality.—Christian Work and Evangelist.

The Day of Sacrificing Love (752).

Christmas Day is the day of sacrificing love. It is the day when self and all thought of self should be laid aside. Life seems to increase selfishness. Experience tells us that in the struggle each man must be for himself. We are learning better. We are learning that each man is to be for his brother-man. The joy of the world, the mitigation of its hardships, the alleviation of its sorrows, are not matters outside our interest. They are the very things for which we should have eyes and hearts. They are the very things for which we must learn to sacrifice our wealth, our ease, and our self-pleasure, to promote. Not with signs of sovereign power did Christ come to speak a royal fiat and abolish all ill; but under limitations, by self-sacrifice, by patience and thought and effort, by doing kindly acts and speaking kindly words, by the sovereign power of simple and self-sacrificing love, did he live and work in the world. And so was the world brought to the feet of God—not by might, not by power, but by the Spirit which was God's. Let self then, be flung aside on Christmas Day and always. Let us throw ourselves into the joys of others, forgetting our own sorrows, into the sorrows of others, forgetting our own happiness.—Bishop of Ripon.

SERVICE LII.

Light at Eventide.
(The End of the Year).
Zechariah 14: 6, 7.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark; but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord; not day, nor night; but it shall come to pass, that at evening-time it shall be light."

Lesson:—Luke 1: 68-80.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

1. **The closing days of the year** awaken retrospect and forecast.

2. Each year is **a type of life**—its beginning, progress, completion.

3. The Gospel fills the closing days of the year—and of life—with the **light of hope.** For God's faithful children they record: (1) **Promises fulfilled,** (2) The memory of **tasks accomplished,** (3) **Guidance** given, (4) The future bright with blessing.

4. Therefore these closing days should be marked by **joy,** and **faith,** and **gratitude.**

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Unexpected Help. (753)—The least acquaintance with the history of the world will bring before us a host of instances in which the oppressed and persecuted, sometimes the cold and apathetic, Church of God found better days dawn when they were least looked for, and so found the fulfillment of the promise, that "at the evening-time there should be light."—Boyd.

He Goeth Before You. (754)—Does not this thought illuminate the close of life? Thou goest before us into the dark valley. "I go to prepare a place for you," said Christ. If love has been busy making ready here, shall love not also be making ready there? It is all our Father's house of many rooms, and we but pass from one into the other. And I for one am content to leave it there, not searching idly into hidden things, but holding that at the grave as at the cradle, preparatory love is on ahead.—Morrison.

Life's Morning. (755)—Just when you expect the dusky shadows to creep on and the twilight deepen into obscurity, the

sun breaks forth and illumines hill and valley with a golden glory. That is why this day is called a day known to the Lord. It is the sort of day which he makes for those who trust him. Unbelieving men always speak dolefully of the evening. It is for them the time when the feast is over and the lights are put out. Their daylight comes first, and after that the dark, and no promise of another morning. The Bible always speaks of the morning coming at the end. Evening and morning made the first day. Evening and morning make up every day of God. Darkness and semi-darkness first, and after that the light.—Rev. J. A. Greenbough.

What Years Give and Take. (756)—The passing of years is like the coming of dawn—slow, silent, inevitable. The most eager cannot hasten the quiet, irrestible movement, and the most reluctant cannot forbid. Some gifts the years bring which we would fain decline—age, sorrow, disappointment. Some treasures they take which we would keep forever—youth, beauty, innocence. But there are more precious treasures which time cannot supply and the years cannot remove—friendship, patience, faith and love.—Herbert L. Willett.

Strength for Today. (757)—O friends, it is only when, to the burdens and cares of today, carefully measured out to us by the Infinite Wisdom and might that gives with them the promise, "As thy day, so shall thy strength be," we wilfully add the burdens of those two awful eternities—yesterday and to-morrow—such burdens as only the mighty God can sustain—that we break down. It isn't the experience of today that drives men mad. It is the remorse for something that happened yesterday, the dread of what to-morrow may disclose.

These are God's days. Leave them with him.

Therefore I think and I do and I journey but one day at a time. That is the easy day. That is the man's day. Nay, rather, that is our day—God's and mine. And while faithfully and dutifully I run my course and work my appointed task on that day of ours, God the Almighty and the all-loving takes care of yesterday and to-morrow.—Robert J. Burdette.

Do not be Discouraged. (758)—In this evening hour of the year, let us review the past months, our hopes and ambitions, and how they have resulted. When the year was in its early morning freshness, and lay before us fair and untried, how earnestly we desired to improve in spiritual as in temporal mat-

ters over past achievement! We resolved to attain a higher, nobler plane of life, and to accomplish better results in the coming months.

Time has passed with its freight of care and joy, success and failure,—what can we say of the retrospect? Comparatively few of the promising seeds of good resolve that seemed so easy of cultivation at the year's beginning, have made a worthy showing in the harvest time.

Be not discouraged! We may begin anew.—Margaret Scott Hall.

Life's Lessons (759).

Sometimes, when all life's lessons have been learned,
And suns and stars for evermore have set,
The things which our weak judgments here have spurned,
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet,
Will flash before us out of life's dark night,
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue;
And we shall see how all God's plans are right,
And how what seemed reproof was love most true.

Dawn of a Tomorrow. (760)—Under no circumstances, whether of pain, or grief, or disappointment, or irreparable mistake, can it be true that there is not something to be done, as well as something to be suffered. And thus it is that the spirit of Christianity draws over our life, not a leaden cloud of Remorse and Despondency, but a sky—not, perhaps, of radiant, but yet of most serene and chastened and manly hope. There is a Past which is gone forever. But there is a Future which is still our own.—F. W. Robertson.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Safely Through (761).

During the Chapman meetings in Philadelphia last winter, a written request was sent to the platform for the singing of the hymn, "Safely through another week." The leader hardly thought it was appropriate for the occasion, the service being on a week day and not on Sunday. On the next night the same request was made, and again on the third night, until it seemed best not only to sing the hymn, but to institute an inquiry as to the man who wanted it sung. It was then learned that he was a middle-aged man, who having just become a Christian felt keenly the temptations along his way, and considered it a triumph when he rounded out a week without succumbing to pit-

falls in his way. When the congregation learned of the personal fight and victory that were behind that request for prayer, they sang the familiar hymn with a new conception of its meaning, realizing that while through it the ripened saint voices his Sabbath praise, the struggling, fiercly tempted beginner in the Christian life may also through it express his gratitude for any period of life unstained by old sins. It may help us all to bear this thought in mind as another calendar year ends. He has reason for gratitude and praise who can look back on twelve completed months and say, from the standpoint of the moral life, "I have made mistakes and failure, but I have been kept, by the grace of God, from grievous sin." On the whole, that means progress.—Congregationalist.

The Shadow Promises the Light (762).

Someone has said that where there is a shadow there must be a light somewhere, and so there is. Death stands by the side of the highway in which we have to travel, and the light of heaven shining upon him throws a shadow across our path. Let us then rejoice that there is a light beyond. Nobody is afraid of a shadow, for a shadow cannot stop a man's pathway even for a moment. The shadow of a dog cannot bite; the shadow of a sword cannot kill; the shadow of death cannot destroy us. Why, therefore, should we be afraid?—J. Wilbur Chapman, D.D.

The Old Year's Blessing (763).

I brought good desires, though as yet but seeds;
Let the New Year make them blossom into deeds.
I brought joy to brighten many happy days;
Let the New Year's angel turn it into praise.
If I gave you sickness, if I brought you care,
Let him make one patience, and the other prayer.
Where I brought you sorrow, through his care, at length,
It may rise triumphant into future strength.
If I broke your idols, showed you they were dust,
Let him turn the knowledge into heavenly trust.
If I brought temptation, let sin die away
Into boundless pity for all hearts that stray.
If your list of errors dark and long appears,
Let the new-born monarch melt them into tears.
May you hold this angel dearer than the last—
So I bless his future, while he crowns my past.

—Adelaide Proctor.

Light at Life's Eventide (764).

I shall tell you the words of one who spoke from his own experience, and who, shortly before he died. wrote as thus:—"Were I to adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The Celestial City is full in my view. Its glories have been upon me, its breezes fan me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears but as an insignificant rill, that may be crossed at a single step, whenever God shall give permission. The Son of Righteousness has been gradually drawing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as he approached, and now he fills the whole hemisphere; pouring forth a flood of glory, in which I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun; exulting, yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this excessive brightness, and wondering with unutterable wonder why God should deign thus to shine upon a sinful worm." There, my hearers, are words dictated by experience; that is what was actually written by a dying man. And, oh, what need I add to it, to make you feel how glorious a sermon it is upon the blessed promise, that "at the evening-time there shall be light!"—Boyd.

The Evening-time Glow (765).

On the 18th of December, 1851, Turner, the painter, died in the front room of No. 119, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, fronting the Thames. To an upper window, no longer able to paint, too feeble to walk, he had been wheeled every morning during those last days, that he might lose no light of the December sun on his beloved Thames.

The Retrospect (766).

At the famous Riviera winter resort on the Mediterranean shore of South France and North Italy, the maritime Alps push their bold spurs to the sea, not rocky and precipitous, but steep hills of two or more thousand feet high. Ground for cultivation is precious, and the industrious peasants have laboriously terraced the hillsides fronting the southern sun. They build a few feet of stone wall, giving a few feet of garden; then another stone wall, and another garden from sea to summit. Standing at the base, as one looks up he sees only the stone walls. Con-

fronting these the hill seems a rocky fortress difficult to surmount. By foot path or carriage drive he zigzags his way up; and, as he turns about and looks back and down, the whole scene is transformed. Stone walls left behind have vanished from sight. Only the gardens are now seen,—grapes, lemons, olives, a continuous green garden all the way to the sea.

Such is life. In youth, as we look up to the high places to which we aspire, difficult problems confront us, which make life appear a hard hill to climb or a rocky fortress difficult to surmount. Day by day we do our best, and step by step go up. When many long years have passed, though the heights have not been fully attained, some ascent has been made. We turn round and look back. Obstacles left behind have vanished, forgotten. Sweet memories come to us of good deeds done, helpful service rendered, friendships and affections of loved and loving ones. Life in the retrospect is transformed to our vision, becoming from age to youth a lovely garden of sweet and sunny memories.—The Christian Register.

The Future Bright (767).

There is a mosque in Damascus which used to be a Christian church. So ancient is the building that Chrysostom once preached in it. But, over an arch in this so venerable building there is still sculptured in Greek a legend which the Moslems have somehow neglected to chisel out—"Thy Kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting Kingdom; and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." That ancient prophecy was true when first sculptured, is true today; is getting truer every day as the world hastens on.—Wayland Hoyt, D.D.

Living up to Our Ideals (768).

One of the speakers told a pathetic story of an old negro who at infinite cost and with infinite pains bought and paid for his little farm, built a house, and painted it white. When the paint was put on, he felt somehow that white was not exactly the right color for a black man's home. "But," said he bravely, "I'm tryin' to be de kin' of a man dat goes with dat kin' of a house."

The Master-Man—Life of Christ

Second Year's Topics.

The following services, LIII to CV, make up a complete life of Christ, and are taken from a sixty-four page booklet, "The Master Man," being the life of Christ in the combined words of the Synoptic Gospels, compiled by Sidney Strong.

Some pastors have used these booklets (price $3 per 100), giving them to members with the announcement that they contained the Scripture lessons for the prayer-meeting topics for the coming year.

Their use will increase the interest in your prayer-meeting, and will help your members form the habit of early Bible reading.

Cards with year's topics furnished for sixty cents per hundred, forty cents for additional hundreds.

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SERVICE LIII.

About the Cradle.

Christmas—His Birth.—Luke 2: 1-20.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Birth of Jesus.

I. His Coming Foretold.

II. Lowly circumstances—Caesar's decree—Journey to Jerusalem—No room at the inn.

III. The Angelic Message.

IV. The Shepherd's Story.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Why was Mary chosen to be the mother of Jesus?

How did Jesus come to be born in Bethlehem?

Why was it desirable that he be born there?

What sort of a place was Bethlehem?

What thoughts come to your mind as you think of his birth in the manger?

Why can you not imagine Jesus having been born in a palace?

What conclusions must we draw from the fact of his lowly birth?

To whom was the first announcement of his birth made?

Where would you naturally suppose such an announcement would be made?

Why should the revelation be made to simple-minded shepherds?

Why was Jesus born into the world?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Peace on Earth. (769)—The true King of the Jews—the rightful Lord of the Universe—was not to be found in palace or fortress. The cattle-stables of the lowly caravanserai were a more fitting birthplace for Him who came to reveal that the soul of the greatest monarch was no dearer or greater in God's sight than the soul of his meanest slave; for him who had no where to lay his head; for him who, from his cross of shame, was to rule the world.

The fancy of poet and painter has revelled in the imaginary glories of the scene. But all this is wide of the reality. Such glories as the simple shepherds saw were seen only by the eye of faith. The light that shined in the darkness was no physical, but a spiritual beam; the dayspring from on high, which had now visited mankind, dawned only in a few faithful and humble hearts.

And the gospels, always truthful and bearing on every page that simplicity which is the stamp of honest narrative, indicate this fact without comment. To the unilluminated fancy it would have seemed incredible that the most stupendous event in the world's history should have taken place without convulsions and catastrophies. The inventions of man differ wholly from the dealings of God. In his designs there is no haste, no weariness; all things are done by him in the majesty of silence.—Farrar.

They That Seek Shall Find. (770)—The shepherds must have been looking out, in their simple ways, towards the invisible and eternal, and seeking that kingdom of God for themselves which was one day, as they believed, to be revealed in their nation at large. Only that mind which has sympathy with external nature can receive in their true significance the impressions it is fitted to convey, and only the heart which has sympathy with spiritual things can recognize their full meaning. Poetic sensibility is required in the one case, and religious in the other. In each case it is the condition of sincere emotion.—Geikie.

Good News. (771)—I. Good News from Heaven. The angels descended from the realm of glory, where God dwells in majesty. Their message came not from earth, but from heaven. How should we welcome tidings from so high a realm?

II. Good news to the Lowly. To whom these tidings came is noteworthy. Whom, out of all the world, did God choose to be the recipients of the greatest news in the annals of the world? He passed by princes, philosophers, priests, nobles, and chose a company of plain, humble shepherds at work in their vocation. If God ever sends an angel to you he will come while you are working, not idling or dreaming.

III. Good News for all Men. The message to the shepherds was "to all people;" not to Jews only, but also to the Gentile world. There is not one soul in all the world but has a profound interest in the coming of Christ.

IV. Good News of Great Joy. There are messages of death, which bring sorrow; there are messages of danger, which bring terror and alarm. Here is a message of great joy—that God has come to earth; that the Infinite has human sympathy; that the Almighty is the all-loving. Let us rejoice in the good tidings.

V. Good News of Salvation. The name "Saviour" is suggestive. Where there is a Saviour there must be a salvation. Through Him who was thus announced comes to us salvation from sin, from death, and from Satan. We are saved through the living Christ!

VI. Good News of Peace. Wherever the message of the angels has gone it has brought peace. That it has not put an end to all war is only because it has not been fully accepted; and even as it is Christianity has changed the normal relation of men and states from one of war to one of peace. Once war was the general condition and peace the exception; now peace is general and war the exception. But, deeper than this, it has given peace to the heart, peace from God, peace within, peace flowing out in love and working in acts of good-will.—Hurbut's Illustrative Notes.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Zoroaster's Forecast (772).

"But the clearest of all these prophecies was one by Zoroaster. The Nestorians say that Zoroaster was a disciple of Jeremiah, from whom he learned about the Messiah, and taught of him to his disciples. As their tradition is remarkably corroborated by Abulpharagius, I will quote his language: 'Zoroaster taught the Persians concerning Christ. He declared that in the latter days a pure virgin should conceive, and that, as soon as the child was born, a star would appear, blazing even at noonday with undiminished lustre.' 'You, my sons,' exclaimed the venerable seer, 'will perceive its rising before any other nation. As soon as you see the star follow it wheresoever it leads you, and adore the mysterious child, offering your gifts to him with the profoundest humility. He is the Almighty Word which created the heavens,' "—Memoirs of Mrs. Judith S. Grant, Missionary to Persia.

Ready to Receive Jesus (773).

There was an underwitted but faithfilled Scotch lad in this country, at the time of the great meteoric shower of November,

1833. When on every side men and women were in terror, this lad's mother aroused him from sleep: "Sandy, Sandy, get up will you? The Day of Judgment has come." Instantly the boy was alive to that call shouting, "Glory to God! I'm ready!"

Carrying the Good News (774).

A native girl was brought from New Zealand to England for her education. She became a Christian. When she desired to go back to her fatherland, her friends tried to dissuade her, saying "You are accustomed to England, it suits your health; besides, you may be shipwrecked. If you get there your people may kill you. Every body will have forgotten you now." "Do you think," she replied, "I can keep the good news to myself? I will return even if I must swim there."

Christmas (775).

By a beautiful road our Christmas comes,
A road full twelve months long,
And every mile is as warm as a smile,
And every hour is a song.
Flower and flake and cloud and sun,
And the winds that riot and sigh,
Have their work to do ere the dreams come true,
And Christmas glows in the sky.
'Tis a beautiful time when Christmas comes
All up the street and down,
For hearts alight make faces bright
When Christmas comes to town.
Neighbor and friend in gladness meet,
And all are neighbors dear,
When the Christmas peace bids evil cease
In the holiest day of the year.

On Earth Peace (776).

Far down the ages these choristers behold the results of the Gospel. Between God and man, the peace of reconciliation and pardon; between man and man, the peace of a common love to Christ binding hearts in unity. As a beautiful illustration of God's providence it is noted that Christ was born during that brief time in the centuries of Roman history while the temple of Janus, in the imperial city, was closed as a token that peace reigned throughout the world. God stilled the din of arms long enough for the Prince of Peace to appear.

SERVICE LIV (2).

About the Cradle.

The Wise Men.—First Worshipers.—Matt. 2:1-12.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

True and False Worshipers.

I. Query and Quest of wise men. "Where is He?" "We have come to worship Him."

II. Herod's Query and Quest. "Where Christ should be born."—The time of the star's appearance—"When ye have found—bring me word—that I may worship."

III. Expression of true and false worship. Wise men's gifts —Herod sought to destroy.

IV. Our Query and Quest—Is He here? Have we come to worship? Are we bringing Him gifts or seeking selfish advantage?

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What evidence do we have of the universal interest of mankind in the birth of Jesus?

Who were these wise men?

Why were they drawn to Jerusalem by a sign in the heavens?

Why did their visit cause such commotion in Jerusalem?

What kind of a man was Herod?

What is there to be commended in the actions of the wise men?

What contrasts may be drawn between the wise men and the inhabitants of Jerusalem?

How was the life of the young child preserved?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Magi and Science. (778)—This incident is a prophecy of the history of the succeeding centuries in which the chosen people have persistently rejected the Messiah, and the Gentiles have accepted him.

In the persons of the Magi, science paid homage to religion. The Magi were the men of science of the period, and their science brought them to Christ. And so it is now. The science of yesterday proudly boasted that it could solve the mystery of the universe. The science of today is more humble, acknowledging that the so-called scientific "explanations" of the

universe are not explanations at all, but only descriptions. There is and can be no real antagonism between religion and science, and their natural relationship is one of mutual respect and cordial co-operation.—Dummelow.

Supplies Heathen Needs. (779)—We see here heathen wisdom led by God to the cradle of Christ. They stand as representatives of the great truth, that, outside the limits of the people of revelation, God moved on hearts and led seeking souls to the light in divers manners. These silent strangers at the cradle carry on the line of recipients of divine messages outside of Israel which is headed by the mysterious Melchizedek, and includes that seer who saw a star arise out of Jacob, and which, in a wider sense, includes many a "poet of their own" and many a patient seeker after truth.

May we not see in these Magi, too, a type of the inmost meaning of heathen religions? Besides their falsehoods and abhorrent dark cruelties and lustfulness, they enshrine confessions of wants which the King in the cradle alone can supply. Their sacrifices proclaim man's need of reconciliation. Their stories of the gods coming down in the likeness of men speak of his longing for a manifestation of God in the flesh. The cradle and the cross are heaven's answer to their sad question. —Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

No Time to Find Jesus (780).

The Russian peasantry have a curious tradition. An old woman was at work in her house when the wise men from the East passed on their way to find the Christ-child. "Come with us," they said, "we have seen His star in the East, and go to worship Him.". "I have my house to set in order; when this is done I will follow and find Him," she replied. But when her work was done the three kings had passed on their way and the star shone no more. She never saw the Christ-child, but she is living and searching for Him still. It is she who in Russian and Italian houses is believed to fill the stockings and dress the tree on Christmas. She fancies that in each poor little one whom she warms and feeds, she may find the Christ-child whom she neglected ages ago.—New Testament Anecdotes.

Seekers (781).

"In every nation there are those who have feared God and wrought righteousness, and have been accepted with him. I

have met in this strange country (India), during the past year, wandering fakirs nominally belonging to both the Hindu and the Mohammedan religions, who also were real seekers after God; whose spirits were chaste and humble; who had long since eschewed idolatry and the harsh tenets of Islam, and were striving through nature to reach up to nature's God.—Geo. H. Pentecost, D.D.

Dreams and Reality (782).

A candidate for admission to church membership under the Rev. Roland Hill, being required to give some account of his first impressions as to the evil of sin, and the needs of the Gospel, related a dream by which he had been affected and led to serious inquiry. When he had ended, Mr. Hill said, "We do not wish to despise a good man's dreams by any means; but we will tell you what we think of the dream, after we have seen how you go on after you are awake."

Ever Seeking (783).

Like these wise men, seeking a King and Saviour, so alchemists for ages dreamed, hoped, labored, to find:

First. "The Elixir of Life,—panacea, all-cure—a substance which confers quasi-immortality upon any one who should swallow it, curing all sickness, assuaging all pain, and transforming hoary age into blooming youth!"

Second, "The Philosopher's Stone, having the same purifying and ennobling office for mineral matter that the elixir of life would have on animal forms. By means of this substance they could effect the transmutation of base metals into perfect metals."—Prof. R. C. Kedzie.

Third, The Fountain of Youth, to seek which the early explorers of America sailed over the ocean. In search of this fountain Ponce de Leon set out from Porto Rico in March, 1512, thinking that it was in Bimini, an imaginary island in the Bahamas. This expedition resulted in the discovery of Florida.

They all searched in vain. But the Star of Bethlehem leads every seeker to Christ, in whom is found the true Elixir of Life, the Philosopher's Stone, and the Fountain of Immortality.

TRUE WORSHIP AND ITS GIFTS

Jesus King (784).

Just as Savonarola wrote over the gates of the city of Florence, "Jesus Christ is King of Florence," so we must write

across each of our American cities, "Jesus Christ is King here. This city must be His city" if our nation is to remain intact. Cities, like individuals, are powerful in the degree that they are controlled by just and righteous laws. Their social, industrial, educational and religious life controls the life of the nation. Their problems are yours and mine. Let all who live within their limits ask themselves the question, "Have I come here for such a time as this?"—Forward.

Gave Her Jewels (786).

Emily Pulpit, a ten-year-old girl, had a pair of diamond earrings which she received at Christmas. One day she approached her father, a jeweler, and said:

"Papa, I don't think I ought to keep my diamond earrings. They are not doing me as much good as they could do somebody who is in need, and I am going to give them away."

"Who are you going to give them to?" asked the astonished father.

"To the Red Cross of Russia, so that they can be sold and the money spent for the benefit of the sick soldiers in the war with Japan."

He acquiesced and the little girl sent her diamond earrings to Countess Cassini at Washington, who had organized a fair in that city to raise funds for the Red Cross Society of Russia.

Countess Cassini's heart was touched and she immediately wrote the little donor a long letter, saying:

"I shall not soon forget your generous act. The earrings were sold and the money went to the fair fund."

How Chinese Value Christ (787).

A missionary wrote: "At Tieling my wife and I were at a free will offering meeting conducted entirely by the Chinese. We watched them as they brought in their offerings. One man came with a bag of grain on his back. He said he had no money, but would give the grain for a brindled calf at the gate which he would give also if the Lord would take it. Another man brought a gun, saying he loved the gun very much, but it was all he had to give. The women brought their ornaments and laid them on the table. One woman, clad in rags, whispered to one of the agent pastors that in all her possessions she had only just one cent, but would like to give that. The pastor held it up, told the story, and the whole congregation broke out in tears of gladness."

SERVICE LV (3).

Notable Events.

When He was Twelve Years Old.—Luke 2: 40-52.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Boyhood of Jesus.

I. The child's environments—family—home—occupation.

II. The child's strength—not like Samson's of the body; strong to do right, to learn, to teach, to submit to reprove and suffer; strong to resist temptation, strong for self-control.

III. The child's wisdom—a model scholar—listened and inquired—had a love and reverence for God's house.

IV. The child's obedience—obeyed His Heavenly Father through obedience to earthly parents.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

How did Nazareth happen to become the boyhood home of Jesus?

How did the Boy Jesus grow?

What is your idea of the personal appearance of Jesus?

What is the story of his visit to Jerusalem?

What progress had he made so far in his studies?

Did he acquire knowledge in the same way as we?

Did he know the secret of his birth?

What religious questions had he already settled?

What kind of a place was Nazareth to grow up in?

What do we know of his family?

How will he earn his living?

What were his religious habits?

How has his boyhood affected our ideas of childhood?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Lived in an Obscure Home. (788)—Besides the obscurity and evil fame of Nazareth it was secluded by position. It lies in a narrow cleft of the limestone hills out of the ordinary roads of commerce.

We see that our Lord's early life was spent in seclusion and poverty, but not in pauperism; that he sanctified labor as a pure and noble thing; that God looks on the heart, and that the dignity or humility, the fame or obscurity of the outer lot

is of no moment in his eyes. He came to convince us that a relative insignificance may be an absolute importance, that myriads of the beloved of God are found among the obscure.—Farrar.

Jesus' First Journey. (789)—We can easily imagine how powerful must have been the influence upon Jesus' human development of this break in the still secluded life; of this glimpse into the great outer world; of this journey through a land of which every hill and every village teemed with sacred memories; of this first visit to that Temple of his Father which was associated with so many mighty events in the story of the kings, his ancestors, and the prophets, his forerunners.—Farrar.

Hearing and Asking. (790)—Not that he assumed the office of teaching—"his hour" for that "was not yet come," for he had yet to "increase in wisdom" as well as "stature." Still there would be in his questions far more than in their answers; perhaps we shall not greatly err, if we suppose that "the questions" which he now "asked them" in return were just the germs of those pregnant questions with which he astonished and silenced them in after years: "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? If David call him Lord, how is he then his son?" "Which is the first and great commandment?" "Who is my neighbor?" —Bib. Com.

His Father's Business. (791)—They understood not the significance of those quiet words. Strange and mournful commentary on the first recorded utterances of the youthful Saviour, spoken to those who were nearest and dearest to him on earth! strange but mournfully prophetic of all his life. "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not."—Farrar.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Her Father's Business (792).

Dorothy Menpes is the youngest addition to the list of English authors. She is a school girl, fifteen years old, but three of her books have already been published, and she is working on a fourth.

Dorothy's father is Mortimer Menpes, the celebrated artist, war correspondent and traveler. He has trained her mind ever since she was a baby, teaching her to see things with the eyes of an artist, and encouraging her to write down her impressions as well as she could.

It occurred to Miss Dorothy that her father's stories would make a book. Whenever she heard him talking to friends she remembered all he said. After they were gone she would write it all down, and soon she had the book ready for publication.

Her book on Japan has beautiful illustrations from her father's brush. The little authoress refuses to take credit for the great popularity of this second book, which ran into five editions.

"Do you think," she says, "that any one would care to read what I wrote if they had not father's pictures to look at as well?"

A Boy's Prayer (793).

A missionary lady in India adopted a little orphan whom she named Shadi. One night when he was six years old, as he knelt by her knee, she said, "Now, Shadi, pray a little prayer all your own." And this was his prayer: "Dear Jesus, make me like what you were, when You were six years old." That little lad but a few years out of heathenism had grasped the first, last and greatest principle of Christian growth,—praying to be like Jesus. Have you grasped it? Have I? Let us answer before Him.

The Home in Nazareth (794).

Nazareth was a small, unnoted walled village lying in a deep cup-like valley among the hills of southern Galilee, on the edge of the great Esdraelon valley, the scene of so much of the history of Israel. Here the town lay in its isolation and seclusion, the encompassing hills in a narrow, unbroken circle, standing like a barrier defending it from the world. "Its houses cluster in the depths of the hollow around the Fountain of the Virgin, or climb in straggling, haphazard order up the hillsides."—Professor Ramsay.

A Boy Among Doctors (795).

That the conduct of the boy Jesus among the temple doctors might well be the becoming, appropriate, natural conduct of a natural boy among wise men, was forcibly illustrated by an interesting incident of the Chicago World's Fair.

"' I'm looking for my boy Sam,' remarked the inventor.

"'Where shall we look? Midway?' was asked.

"'No; I'll try the Electricity Building. That boy of mine thinks electricity, reads electricity, talks electricity; and though

he is only 13, he understands electricity far better than I do. Steam I can handle; but lightning is too much for me.'

"It was in the upper room of the Electricity Building that Sam was finally found. 'And when they saw him, they were astonished,' described accurately the feelings of the searchers. Literally the boy appeared 'sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them, and asking them questions.'

"For there, among a group of thoughtful-faced men, was the lad of our search, leaning forward, his whole face alight and alive as he listened to the discussion in progress.

"What it meant we learned when one of the group came forward.

"They were wise men, specialists in electrical science, who had met by appointment to inspect a recent invention. The first arrival had found Sam absorbed in an examination of the exhibited model of the machine to be discussed. Pleased at the boy's intelligent interest, the specialist questioned him, and was surprised at his clear understanding of the principals of its construction.

" 'Accordingly,' concluded the specialist, 'we invited him to take a seat with us, and to hear our discussion if he chose, and for two hours he had listened with genuine understanding and appreciation.'

" 'And once in a while I asked a question,' related Sam afterwards, 'and those men explained things to me just as if I was one of them.' "—Zillah Foster in the S. S. Times.

SERVICE LVI (4).

Notable Events.

When Thirty Years Old.—Luke 3:3; Matt. 3:7-10; Mark 1:5; Luke 3:10-18.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Messiah's Messenger.

I. His character, (1) Prophetic in habits of life and preaching. "He came in the power and spirit of Elijah," (2) Great humility—"a voice of one crying in the wilderness"—"He must increase, I must decrease," (3) Christ's estimate, "None greater born of woman than John the Baptist."

II. His office, (1) Unique as a herald of the Messiah, no one else like him in history, (2) Peculiar in his message—"Prepare ye the way of the Lord," (3) Separate in his work; (a) institution of baptism as an outer sign of inner change; (b) and as the one who baptized Jesus.

III. We may be the Messiah Messengers to point men to Christ!

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What do you think of John the Baptist as a man?

What were some of his religious convictions?

What kind of work was he called upon to do?

How was he brought to the sense of his duty? Jer. 20:7-9.

In what condition did he find society?

What was his attitude toward the religious leaders of his time?

What was his message to his generation?

What do you think of his advice on the problems of his day?

What was Jesus' estimate of his character? Matt. 11:7-11.

Does John's message have any significance for us today?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Cleanse Me. (796)—Washing had, in all ages, been used as a religious symbol and significant rite. Naaman's leprosy had been cleansed away in the waters of the Jordan. The priests in the Temple practiced constant ablutions, and others were required daily from the people at large, to remove ceremonial impurity. David had prayed, "Wash me from mine iniquity."

Isaiah had cried, "Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings." Ezekiel had told his countrymen to "wash their hearts from wickedness." Ablution in the East, is indeed, of itself, almost a religious duty.—Geikie.

Power to Draw Men. (797)—Note the universal excitement which John produced. He did not come out of the desert with his message. If men would hear it, they must go to him. And they went. Wherever a religious teacher has John's qualities, unalterable resolution, conspicuous superiority to considerations of ease and comfort, a direct vision of the unseen, and a message from God, the crowds will go out to see him. The demand for righteous living as the only test of religious emotion is needed in this generation as much as it ever was.—Maclaren.

John Was Rigid. (798)—Repentance, with John, was no mere formal confession, but a change of mind; it included not only regret for the past, but a new life for the future. The kingdom of God, with John, was, like that of Isaiah, a kingdom of righteousness and holiness. He had sat at the feet of the prophets, not of the Rabbis. He says nothing of an earthly kingdom, or political glory. The sins that had separated between them and God, must be removed, and their place filled with "fruits meet for repentance," if the divine kingdom was to be established among them.—Geikie.

Aspects of Baptism. (799)—The baptism of Jesus has more than one aspect and significance. To John it was with its miraculous accompaniments a sign that Jesus was the promised Messiah and the Son of God. To Israel it was "the showing to the people" of the promised monarch, and his consecration to the three-fold office of prophet, priest and king. To the Christian Church it is the type and first example of all true baptism—the baptism, that is, of water and the spirit.

To Jesus himself this baptism marked the point in his career when there first awoke in him the complete consciousness of his divine sonship, and of all the tremendous consequences which this unique relationship to God and man involved.—Dummelow.

Peculiarities of John the Baptist. (800)—We do not care about the buttons on a telegraph messenger's jacket, we are anxious to read the telegram—So people did not care for John's uncouth raiment, they were so eager to hear his burning words—like a sign post, he ever pointed one way—"Behold the Lamb of God!"

When asked who he was—"A voice," says John, "telling of One Mightier than I."

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Power of the Message (801).

When Robert Moffat carried the gospel message into the Matabele country, its king possessed armies of drilled warriors and although heads rolled off at the lifting of his finger, the brave messenger did not hesitate to tell him the blessings of Christianity and the fiendish wickedness of his heathen customs. When he spoke of Christ raising the dead, the king became alarmed and asked if the dead slain in battle would arise. "Yes," said the missionary, "and come to judgment."

"Father, I love you much," replied the king, "but I do not wish to hear that the dead will rise. The dead must not rise." He raised his hand shaking as if quivering a spear, "I have slain thousands and shall they arise?" His conscience had been awakened by Christ's Messenger.

The Coming of the King. (802).

Bruce the famous African traveler, tells of a custom of the King of Abyssinia in making ready for one of his military campaigns which illustrates the Oriental preparation for the coming of the king. A proclamation goes out: "Buy your mules, get ready your provision, pay your servants; for after such a day, they that seek me here shall not find me." A little later another proclamation, "Cut down the kantuffa in the four quarters of the world; for I do not know where I am going." This kantuffa is a thorn tree and Bruce adds on one occasion when the king's outer robe was pulled off by a branch he immediately ordered that the ruler of this district and his son be executed on the tree. Any one who has traveled in Palestine through the sharp thistle bushes will appreciate the feelings of the king of Abyssinia even though he does not approve of his retaliatory measures.—Trumbull's Studies in Oriental Social Life.

Crown Prince to the Rescue (803).

"At the battle of Sadowa, July 3, 1866, when the pickets closed in the morning, Von Moltke saluted King William and said, 'To-day your Majesty will win not only the battle, but the campaign.' At noon it did not seem so. Prince Frederick Charles' corps were withering under the hottest artillery fire

of this century save that at Gettysburg, just three years earlier to the hour. In a few minutes they must give way. Hark! what means this cheering on the left? New cannons boom, and the Austrian fire slackens. Ah! Von Moltke knows. The Crown Prince has arrived with his fresh corps. He has stormed the heights of Chlum; he enfilades the whole Austrian line; Benedek is beaten; on, on to Vienna; the war is ended!

"Brothers, let us away bravely; each to his place in Jehovah's hosts! Our Crown Prince, with fresh forces right from heaven, has reached the field."—E. Benjamin Andrews, D.D., Ex-President of Brown University.

King's Messengers (804).

The Christian minister is an embassador for Christ. He may in himself be poor and lacking, but in so far as he speaks any true word for God it is dangerous to trifle with him, for his authority is that of a king's messenger. Back of him are all the sanctions and blazings and burnings of the great White Throne and the inextinguishable glory of the Divine Name. Though the messenger be refused, his message will judge the rejectors in the last day.

Under Orders (805).

Rev. F. B. Meyer says, and the saying has been proved in numberless cases, "The supreme inquiry for each of us, when summoned to a new work, is not whether we possess sufficient strength or qualifications for it, but if we have been called to it of God; and when that is so, there is no such thing as impossibility, or any cause for anxiety." When God says "Forward," arise and go, for, says Jehovah, "I will not fail thee or forsake thee." With such a promise from such a source there can be no failures. The great blessedness of such a promise lies in the fact that centuries of use has not diminished its power.

Preparing the Way (806).

Dr. Wm. M. Thomson, author of "The Land and the Book," says: "When Ibrahim Pasha proposed to visit certain places on Lebanon, the emeers and sheiks sent forth a general proclamation, somewhat in the style of Isaiah's exhortation to all the inhabitants to assemble along the proposed route and prepare the way before him. The same was done in 1845, on a grand scale, when the present Sultan visited Brusa. The stones were gathered out, crooked places straightened, and rough ones made level and smooth."

SERVICE LVII (7).

Notable Events.

A Time of Testing.—Matt. 4: 1-11; Luke 4: 13; Mark 1: 13.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Tempted in all Points.

I. Physical desires—tempted to use powers given for ministration to others in self-gratification.

II. Mental proof—tempted to self-destruction to test and prove that these powers were God-given.

III. Spiritual pride—tempted to gain world dominion by winning world approval—doing as Satan commanded—bowing down instead of winning it to God by self-abnegation.

IV. How Victory Came, (1) Along line of temptation, the way of escape—Perversion of Scripture met by it is written, (2) Angels came and ministered giving evidence he had been tempted to seek for self.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What reasons are there for believing that the temptations of Jesus were just as real as our own?

Why should his great struggle with temptation come just at this time?

How do we know that this was not a visible appearance of Satan to him?

What is there to show that Jesus was passing through a great mental struggle at this time?

What was the real temptation in the suggestion to make bread from a stone?

How did the temptation to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple differ from this?

What would make the thought of universal rule attractive to Jesus?

What was involved in the suggestion to fall down and worship Satan?

How did he successfully resist temptation?

How do we know he was tempted frequently? Luke 4: 13.

What other seasons of temptation do we have the record of? Matt. 16: 21-23; John 6: 15; 14: 30.

How does his temptation help us? Heb. 4: 15, 16.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Cast Thyself Down. (807)—The first temptation had been to natural appetite and impulse; the second was to unhallowed ambition; the third is to rash confidence and spiritual pride. The last was based, with profound ingenuity, on the expression of absolute trust with which the first temptation had been rejected. It asked as it were for a splendid proof of that trust, and appealed to perverted spiritual instincts. It had none of the vulgar and sensuous elements of the other temptations. It was at the same time a confession of impotence. "Cast thyself down." The devil may place the soul in peril and temptation, but can never make it sin. "It is," as St. Augustine says, "the devil's part to suggest, it is ours not to consent."—Farrar.

Satan Appeals to Appetites. (808)—Hunger has nothing to do with right or wrong. It asserts itself independent of all considerations. In itself neutral, it may lead to sin. Satan had tried the same bait before on the first Adam. It had answered so well then that he thinks himself wise in bringing it out once more.

The temptation addressed to Christ's physical nature was, to put it roughly, "Look out for yourself." His answer was, "As Son of God, I hold by my filial dependence. As man, I share my brethren's lot, and am content to live as they live."

The lessons for us from the second temptations are weighty. Faith may be perverted. God's promised protection is available, not in paths of our own choosing, but only where he has sent us.

The last temptation was not only to fling away the ideal of his kingdom, but to reverse the means for its establishment. The cravings of his followers, the expectations of his race, the certainty of an enthusiastic response if he would put himself at their head, and the equal certainty of death if he would not, were always urging him to the very same thing.

But Christ's kingdom can only be set up by suffering, utter self-sacrifice, gentleness and goodness. Christ is king of all because he is servant of all. His cross is his throne.—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Our Greatest Enemy (809).

It is like the man in the poem of Hall Caine's "The Bondman," who, from his earliest youth, had been chained to a being, who ever kept behind him and held him back in his every en-

deavor to attain to something better. This being blasted his crops, and was ruining his family. At last he began a death struggle against his enemy, and, as they grappled in the last fight, he saw the face of his enemy. It was himself.

Satan Agreeable (810).

The devil need not be conceived, with mediaeval grotesqueness indeed, as a monster with horn and hoof and fiery breath. Christ characterizes him as "the prince of the world." He is thus the prince of all that homes itself in agreeable, sensuous, material world conditions.

Healers of Bodies and Souls (811).

Rev. Len Broughton went through a struggle in his young manhood. He had been practicing medicine with marked success, earning between four and five thousand dollars a year. He felt at the same time a distinct call to the ministry, which he had turned down again and again, as often as God spoke to him. One day, in the midst of his work, he felt severe pain in his side, and as the pain increased, he went to Baltimore to consult an expert physician. After a thorough examination he was told that one of two alternatives was open to him. He might live a year without an operation, or in case an operation was performed at once he had about one chance in a hundred for recovery. He elected the former, and went home resolved not to write another prescription, but to give the twelve months still left to him to the ministry of his church.

Success from Failure (813).

A young man was studying for the ministry. He was a brilliant student, and he was engaged to a beautiful girl. He was to preach a trial sermon previous to his ordination, and a stenographer was appointed to take it. He was so conscious that she was in the audience that he failed miserably, and as a result was rejected by the examining board. The disappointment was terribly galling to him, and his grief was pointed by the fact that his lady friend rejected his suit on account of his failure to satisfy the bishops. He was left with his sorrow, and fought a terrible battle alone with God. There it was that he came unto himself, and the life that emerged from the closet has been bearing a remarkable fruitage ever since. That young man was G. Campbell Morgan, who is perhaps one of the greatest expository preachers of the century.

SERVICE LVIII. (6)

Notable Events.

Early Converts.—Matt. 4: 18-22; Mark 2: 13-14; Luke 5: 28-32

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Call of Jesus.

I. (1) To fellowship—"Follow me." "Come and see," (2) Self-denial—"Forsook all," (3) New work "Fishers of men," (4) Rich reward.

II. A call to (1) Faith, (2) Labor, (3) Suffering and cross-bearing, (4) To our Heavenly home.

III. The fishing of Apostleship, (1) We must know the lake, (2) And how to allure, (3) Have patience to wait, (4) Be ready to hazard life, (5) Must cast out net in confidence, (6) Expect a draught.—Biblical Encyclopedia.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Where had Jesus met these four fishermen before?

Why were they the kind of men he needed?

What was his object in gathering about him a body of disciples?

Why did he call them apostles?

Did they have any adequate conception of what this call meant?

Who were the leaders?

What do you think of the unknown apostles?

Why did Jesus choose Judas?

What means did he rely upon to fit them for their work?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Drew by His Words. (814)—Jesus had drawn the fishermen to himself, as they were to draw others, not by craft or force, but by the power of his living words and the spirit of love. Their loyalty was free and spontaneous. The calm greatness of the character of Jesus shines out in such an unpretending beginning, as the germ and center of a movement which is to revolutionize the world. But insignificant as it might seem, it was only so when judged by a human standard. These men touched with the love of Heavenly Truth, and eager to win others to embrace it, were living spiritual forces, destined by a law of nature to repeat themselves in ever wider circles, though successive generations.—Geikie.

Called a Business Man. (815)—Matthew may have been only one of the numerous class to whom religion is a matter quite outside of daily life, and who, having first gone astray through ignorance, feel themselves ever farther repelled, or rather shut out by the narrow, harsh uncharitableness of those whom they look upon as the religious and pious.

When Jesus said "Follow me," the past seemed all swallowed up in the present bliss. He said not a word, for his soul was in the speechless surprise of unexpected love and grace; but he rose up, left the custom-house, and followed him. That was a gain that day, not of Matthew alone, but of all the poor and needy in Israel—nay, of all sinners from among men, to whom the door of heaven was opened.—Edersheim.

To Save Sinners. (816)—Jesus caught the Pharisees' hissing whisper, and, ere the embarrassed disciples could utter a word, he flung his answer in his accusers' faces: "They that are strong have no need of a physician, but they that are ill." The terse epigram was an unanswerable vindication of his attitude toward those outcast, and it involved at the same time a high claim on his own behalf. He was the Physician of souls, and his mission was the healing of their manifold distemper. It was therefore right that, wherever the plague was rife, there he should be in the exercise of his ministry of mercy, "I came not" he explained with manifest irony, "to call righteous men, but sinners." His irony pierced like a rapier through their masks of sanctity. Despite their pretentions they were in a worse case than the sinners whom they scorned. The insidious disease was doing its fatal work unperceived and unarrested.—David Smith.

Foundation of the Church. (817)—Not the least important task which engaged Jesus in the course of his ministry, was the formation and instruction of an inner circle of disciples. It was great work that Jesus had undertaken, and he needed helpers. He needed also faithful comrades who would continue with him and afford him support and sympathy. Above all, a day was coming when he must depart, and, unless there were loyal hands to take it up and carry it forward, his work would fall to the ground.

No sooner had Jesus entered upon his active ministry than he set about choosing the men who should be with him continually. Since the time was short and they would have much to

learn, much also to unlearn, it was needful that they should be chosen as early as might be.—David Smith.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Sign of the Fish (818).

The symbols upon early Christian monuments, of which so many have been discovered this last century, are curious and interesting. One of the most frequent is that of the fish.

The figure of the fish is used, and also the Greek word for fish. Ramsay, in his excavations in Asia Minor, has found some very important inscriptions in which the fish signs are frequent. But why was it that the early Christians used this sign? The reason will appear when we remember that they found in the letters of the Greek word for fish an acrostic on the name of our Saviour. The word is "ichthus." Each letter of the word in the original Greek begins one of the words in the following phrase: "Jesus Christ, Son of God, the Saviour."

Ramsay tells us that it was customary in Asia Minor, in the second century, for the Christians to use this symbolical language. It was hardly safe, then, for them to speak openly of their faith in Christ. They were accustomed to wear rings with the fish signs as a signet, much as we wear symbolic badges today. One day two men met, neither aware of the faith of the other. One, without saying a word, traced with his stick the figure of a fish in the sand. The other quickly burst out in assertion of his Christian faith, for the fish symbol had declared allegiance to Christ.

Winning the World (819).

To do things for the world, to make our existence a positive element, though no bigger than a grain of sand in this great system wherein we live, that is a new joy, of which the idle person knows no more than the mole knows of sunshine or the serpent of the eagle's triumphant flight in the air.—Phillips Brooks.

A lady of fashion became tired of a life mainly employed in eating and dressing, and resolved to devote herself and her money to a nobler object. At the close of the war she went to a sandy island off the Atlantic coast, where two hundred persons were living in ignorance and poverty, and established her home there so as to benefit the inhabitants. She began with teaching how to cultivate the land lucratively, next established a school, and afterward a church.

SERVICE LIX (7).

Notable Events.

Love for the Masses.—Matt. 9: 35-38.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Labor of Love—The Love of Jesus.

I. Active—went about teaching—preaching—healing—moved.

II. Indiscriminating—without respect to place or person—city and village—synagogues as well as temple—all manner of diseases—multitude as well as those in places of worship.

III. Intelligent—taught and preached to lift and overcome ignorance and war.

IV. Powerful—met men's needs on their own ground—sought men—conferred benefits.

V. Compassionate—moved to great pity—met men's need by close personal relationship—sheep and shepherd.—Passionate appeal to his followers to share his labors of loving men into the Kingdom.

VI. Our pattern—Love like His—O, to live like him—O! to work like him.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Compare Jesus' plan of work with that of our foreign missionaries today.

Compare the relation between the harvest and the laborers then and now.

Why did he wish to know the opinion of the people?

Why was Jesus so enthusiastic over Peter's answer?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Teaching and Healing. (821)—Note the contrast between John's ministry and Christ's, in that the former stayed in one spot, and the crowds had to go out to him, while the very genius of Christ's mission expressed itself in that this shepherd king sought the sad and sick, and "went about in all Galilee." Observe, too, that he teaches and preaches the good news of the kingdom before he heals.

It may be questioned whether we generally have an adequate notion of the immense number of Christ's miracles. Our Lord's miracles are told by units, they seem to have been wrought by scores. They were parables of his higher work, on

men's souls, which he comes to cleanse from the oppression of demons, from the foamings of epilepsy, from impotence as to doing right. They were tokens of the inexhaustible fountain of power, and of the swift and equally inexhaustible treasures of sympathy, which dwelt in him.—Maclaren.

The Test Question. (822)—"But who say ye that I am?" Had that great question been answered otherwise, the mission of the Saviour would have wholly failed and Christianity and Christendom have never been. For the work of Christ on earth lay mainly with his disciples. He sowed the seed, they reaped the harvest; he converted them and they the world. He had never openly spoken of his Messiahship. But it was his will that the light of revelation should dawn gradually on the minds of his children; that it should spring more from the truths he spake, and the life he lived, than from the wonders which he wrought. It was in the Son of Man that they were to recognize the Son of God.—Farrar.

The Rock. (823)—In the faith which Peter thus expressed, Jesus saw the germ of all that living faith by which true believers of every age were to be animated—that faith which was to form the very life and strength of the community, the church, which he was to gather out from among the nations—the fruit of God's own work within human souls.—Hanna.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Love Like Christ's (824).

The Princess Eugenie of Sweden sold her diamonds that a home for incurables might be built. She prayed much for the conversion of one of its poor inmates. One day when the Princess visited her, the woman burst into tears and said, "The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth from all sin. He has cleansed mine." "In those tears," said the Princess, "I saw my diamonds again."

Tears of Love (825).

Some of your tears should be like Christ's tears—for other people's troubles. He never wept for himself. You may not be able to be like him altogether, but follow him part way. Let half your tears be for others. Was the last time you cried caused by your own troubles? Then shed no more tears for yourself until your sympathy with other people has touched you and made you weep. Have some Christ tears before you cry for yourself again.—Congregationalist.

SERVICE LX (8).

Notable Events.

The Transfiguration.—Luke 9:28-35.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Transfiguration.—I. Experience of Jesus the Son of Man—he prayed—the way to glory opened—had communion and fellowship with Moses and Elijah—the law giver and prophet whose word He had come to fulfil—a revelation of the coming events of the Cross—Divine approval and glory of the Father conferred. II. Disciples' experience. They saw Jesus glorified—they heard God's voice—they knew Moses and Elijah so we shall know each other in the glorified state. They were exalted yet feared in the presence of the glory of God.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Why did Jesus select these three as companions rather than the others?

Did Moses and Elijah appear as individuals or as representatives?

What ideas of the future life are suggested by the appearance of these two persons?

What is the significance of the topic of their conversation?

What was the purpose and meaning of the transfiguration of Jesus?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

His Future Glory. (828)—The Transfiguration was designed to reconcile the disciples to the incredible and repulsive idea of Messiah's sufferings by revealing to them the glories that should follow. In the judgment of Moses and Elijah that issue, which seemed to the disciples an intolerable ignominy and a crushing disaster, was a splendid triumph, like the mighty deliverance which God had wrought for Israel when he brought her by the hand of Moses out of the land of bondage and made her a free nation. In the copies of St. Luke's Gospel which were in use in St. Chrysostom's day, this sentence ran: "They spake of the glory which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem." And such was the conception of her Lord's sufferings which was by and by revealed to the church. "We behold Jesus," it is written in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "by reason of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor."—David Smith.

Christ the Hope of all Time. (829)—The unity of the old and new covenant is wonderfully attested in this apparition of the princes of the old in solemn yet familiar intercourse with the Lord of the new; and with this unity the subordination of the old to the new; that "Christ is the end of the law," and the object to which all prophecy pointed; that therefore the great purpose of these had now been fulfilled. All this was declared by the fact that Moses and Elijah, belonging to a merely preparatory dispensation, vanish; but Christ, who is the head of an everlasting dispensation, after whom we do not look for another, remains.

What Do Men Say Today? (830)—Why did Christ begin by asking about the popular judgment of his personality? Apparently in order to bring clearly home to the disciples that, as far as the masses were concerned, his work and theirs had failed, and had, for net results, total misconception. The second question, "But who say ye that I am?" with its sharp transition, is meant to force home the conviction of the gulf between his disciples and the whole nation. He would have them feel their isolation, and face the fact that they stood alone in their faith; and he would test them whether, knowing that they did stand alone, they had courage and tenacity to re-assert it. The unpopularity of a belief drives away cowards, and draws the brave and true. If none else believed in him, that was an additional reason for loving hearts to cleave to him; and those only truly know and love him who are ready to stand by him, if they stand alone—Athanasius against the world. Mark, too, that this is the all-important question for every man. Our own individual "thought" of him determines our whole worth and fate.—Maclaren.

Vision of Ourselves. (831)—The method by which God brings his children to their best attainment, is a method full of wisdom and beauty. First he lets shine upon them for a moment the thing he wants them to become, the greatness or the goodness which he wishes them to reach. And then, with that shining vision fastened in their hearts, he sets them forth on the long road to reach it. The vision does not make it theirs. The journey is still to be made, the battle is still to be fought, the task is still to be done. But all the time, through the long process, that sight which the man saw from the mountain-top is still before the eyes, and no darkness can be perfectly discouraging to him who keeps that memory and prophecy of light.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Transfigured Lives (832).

Communion with Christ transfigures a life. Everyone we meet leaves a touch upon us which becomes part of our character. Our lives are like sheets of paper; and every one who comes writes a word, or a line, or leaves a little picture painted there.—J. R. Miller.

"O, Master, it is good to be
Entranced, enwrapt, alone with Thee;
Till we, too, change from grace to grace,
Gazing on that transfigured face."

Pray and Work (833).

It was said that Francis Xavier, the Jesuit missionary, had great power in prayer. Some one watched him to see how he prayed. This person scarcely ever saw him on his knees, for there was no time for this; but as he was busy helping others, ministering in countless ways to those who came to him, he was heard saying over and over again, "Jesus! Jesus! Jesus." He talked with Christ continually as he worked. Everything he did was done with prayer. Thus may we pray as we work and work as we pray.

The Glory Light (834).

Finney, who asked God to withdraw for he could not bear his power, and others who have experienced the strong consciousness of God's presence, speak of the consciousness of light, in some instances so intense as to produce blindness as in the case of Paul or so strong that its reflection brought a shining to the face of the beholder like Moses who wore the veil over his face after he had been on Mount Sinai.

"It is a peculiar thing," said an embalmer as he stood by a woman's casket, "but it isn't necessary to tell me she was a Christian; I always know as soon as I see a body; the glory leaves its stamp on the face."

The Glorified Spirit (835).

Dannecker, the German sculptor, spent eight years upon a statue of Christ, then showed it to a child and asked, "Who is that?" When she replied, "A great man," he turned away disheartened for he knew his work was a failure. Several years more of labor, then again he invited the child's opinion. After gazing in silence and awe, bursting into tears she said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me." He had caught the Master's spirit—his work was a success.

SERVICE LXI (9).

Notable Events.

Jesus and Children.—Mark 10: 13-16.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Jesus and Children. I. Parental solicitude—came bringing the children that they might have blessings and benefits of this Great Teacher. II. Disciples' rebuke.—They may not have wanted their meetings disturbed—or selfish—wanted more of the Master's time—might have thought children did not need Jesus. Their attitude is a picture of some churches. III. Jesus' attitude. Indignant with disciples—gave more than parents asked—took them in his arms—honored childhood by using it for a model—drawing the children close to him because of their likeness to him in spirit.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What was the parents' thought of Jesus and their children?

What was the disciples' thought?

What conditions of our modern life show most vividly the changes nineteen centuries have wrought?

What did Jesus mean when he made childhood the test for entrance to the kingdom?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Suffer Little Children (836)—The characteristics of the child are those which the man must have, in order to enter the kingdom; childhood has a special adaption to Christianity. For instance, take dependence, trust, simplicity, unconsciousness, and docility.

These are the very characteristics of childhood, and these are the very emotions of mind and heart which Christianity requires. Add the child's strong faculty of imagination and his implicit belief; making the form of Christianity as the story of a life so easy to him. And we may add too: the absence of intellectual pride; the absence of the habit of dallying with moral truth. Everybody is to the child either a "good" man or a "bad." They have an intense realization of the unseen; an absence of developed vices and hard world-lines; a faculty of living in the present, free from anxious care and worldly hearts. But while thus they have special adaptation for receiving, they too need to

come to Christ. "Suffer them to come unto me," the youngest child needs to, can, ought to, come to Christ. Children ought to grow up in Christian households, "innocent from much transgression." We ought to expect them to grow up Christian.

The children are committed to our care.

The end of all training and care is that they should by voluntary act draw near to him.

See that we do not hinder their coming. The church, and we as individual Christians, too often hinder this "coming."

Do not hinder by the presentation of the Gospel in a repellant form, either hardly dogmatic or sour.

Do not hinder by the requirement of such piety as is unnatural to a child.

Do not hinder by inconsistencies. This is a warning for Christian parents in particular.

Do not hinder by neglect. "Despise not one of these little ones."—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Promises to Children (837).

Lincoln was great in his honesty. His regard for his word is shown in the conversation he had while a member of Congress, when a friend criticised him for declining to drink wine.

"I mean no disrespect," answered Lincoln, "but I promised my mother only a few days before she died that I would never use anything intoxicating as a beverage, and I consider that promise as binding today as it was the day I gave it."

"But," the friend continued, "there is a great difference between a child surrounded by a rough class of drinkers and a man in a home of refinement."

"A promise is a promise forever," answered Lincoln, "and when made to a mother it is doubly binding."

Another story is told of how Lincoln made a caller keep his promise. In order to get one of Mr. Lincoln's boys to come to him, the caller offered the child his watch-charm. The boy climbed into the man's lap. Finally, the gentleman arose to go, when Mr. Lincoln said to him:

"Are you not going to keep your promise to my boy?"

"What promise?" asked the visitor.

"You said you would give him that charm."

"Oh, I could not," said the visitor. "It is not only valuable, but I prize it as an heirloom."

"Give it to him," said Mr. Lincoln, sternly. "I should not want him to know that I entertained one who had no regard for his word."

The gentleman removed the charm and handed it to the boy, having learned a valuable lesson.

He Wanted Justice (838).

The family were at their devotions the other morning in the home of a West End clergyman, says the Classmate. Master six-year-old had been at his mischievous pranks that morning, and the father prayed for the naughty boy:—

A short time later the lad's mother found him in a closet upstairs. He was sobbing bitterly.

"O, mother!" he exclaimed indignantly, "father tells God of all the bad things I do, but never tells him a word about the good that's in me."

As a Child (839).

The first thing for acceptance of truth is to unlearn human doctrines and become as a little child.—General Gordon.

Hand of Child (840).

Those who toil bravely are strongest,
The humble and poor become great,
And so from these brown-handed children
Shall grow mighty rulers of state.
The pen of the author and statesman,
The noble and wise of the land,
The sword and the chisel and palette
Shall be held in the little brown hand.

Forget Boyhood (842).

Blessed is the man who never forgets that when he was a boy he spake as a boy, he understood as a boy, he thought as a boy, and who does not expect boys to put away boyish things until they become men.—Journal of Education.

A Million Boys (843).

Seventy-five per cent of the boys in our Sunday-Schools never become Christians nor members of the church.

You can do this special work for boys as well as you can do any other religious work, if you really care for saving the boys, and give it the same attention you give other things.

Prejudice and indifference only stand in the way of seeing a million boys brought to Christ and trained in Christian service this year.—Edward D. Goller.

SERVICE LXII (10).

Notable Events.

Jesus and riches.—Matt. 19: 16-22.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Coming to Jesus.—A right thing to come to Jesus, in a right way, for a right thing, in a right spirit. This last element of coming rightly he left out. I. How he came. (1) publicly; (2) eagerly, "running"; (3) humbly, "kneeling"; (4) respectfully, "Good Master." II. Why he came: (1) belief in a future state; (2) concern to obtain it; in this he differed from many; (3) thought something must be done; many think not of this, do nothing; (4) thought he was willing and able to do anything needful, did not know himself, had not counted the cost.—The Hive.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What was the ruler's thought that led him to Jesus?

Was anything wrong with his keeping of the commandments?

Why did Jesus set before him such an ideal?

Would Jesus apply such a test in this day?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

One Thing Lacking. (845)—The answer was a grievous disappointment to the inquirer. Those commandments and many more he had faithfully and laboriously observed, thinking thereby to attain to peace; and, finding no rest for his soul in the way of legal righteousness, he had come to Jesus, hoping to be shown some better way. And, the teacher of whom he had expected so much, pointed him to the old unprofitable way! Sadly and wearily he replied: "All this I observed from my youth. What lack I yet?"

Jesus made the demand in good earnest, but to suppose that he here makes poverty a universal condition of discipleship were a profound misconception. He dealt with men after the manner of a skillful physician, discovering their diverse plagues and administering to each the appropriate remedy. And so, when the young ruler came to him, he discovered what was the plague of his heart, the canker that was eating into his soul. It was his wealth, and Jesus laid his hand upon it and declared that it must

go. Whatever it be that a man prizes most, the Lord claims for the Kingdom of Heaven a prior devotion; and "that man who has anything in the world so dear to him, that he cannot spare it for Christ, if he call for it, is no true Christian."—David Smith.

Missed His Chance. (846)—If there was something attractive in the mingled impetuosity and humility of one so young and distinguished, yet so candid and earnest, there was in his question much that was objectionable. The notion that he could gain eternal life by "doing some good thing," rested on a basis radically false.

Jesus, as the youth wanted to do something, tells him of the commandments of the Second Table. Doubtless the mere letter he may have observed, as millions have; but he evidently knew little of all that those commandments had been interpreted by the Christ to mean. And Jesus, seeing his sincerity, loved him, and gave him one short crucial test of his real condition. He was not content with the commonplace; he aspired after the heroical, or rather thought that he did; therefore Jesus gave him an heroic act to do. "One thing," he said, "thou lackest," and bade him go, sell all that he had, distribute it to the poor, and come and follow him.

It was too much. The young ruler went away, very sorrowful grief in his heart, and a cloud upon his brow, for he had great possessions; he made, as Dante calls it, "the great refusal."—F. W. Farrar.

All These Have I Broken. (847)—How many of us are there who, if ever we cast a careless glance over our lives, are quite satisfied with their external respectability! As long as the chambers that look to the street are fairly clean, many think that all is right. But what is there rotting and festering down in the cellars? Do we ever go down there with the "candle of the Lord" in our hands? If we do, the ruler's boast, "All these have I kept," will falter into "All these have I broken."

We may be sure it was the man's money which stood between him and eternal life. If something else had been his chief temptation, that something would have been signalized as needful to be given up. There is no general principle of conduct laid down here, but a specific injunction determined by the individual's character. All diseases are not treated with the same medicines. The principle involved is, surrender what hinders entire following of Jesus.—Alexander Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Riches and Happiness (848).

Nathan Myers Rothschild, of London, was one of the most devoted worshipers that ever laid a withered soul on the altar of mammon. For years he wielded the purse of the world, and had more influence than both houses of parliament. He purchased bills on the government a single day to the amount of twenty million dollars, and with the profits on a single loan bought an estate at seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Yet he was a miserable man, and with sorrowful earnestness exclaimed to men who congratulated him on his colossal wealth and magnificent mansion—thence inferring that he was happy—"Happy! me happy!"

The Christian Idol (849).

A collector in Bombay has an idol with "Heathen Idol" written on it, and a Twenty Dollar gold piece with "Christian Idol" attached to it.

"I have often thought," said a Christian gentleman, "that the difference betwixt my coachman and myself is not great—we are both stewards. I direct him to take an inside place for me and a place outside for himself. He was used to the one and I was used to the other. We accomplished the journey in the same time and almost with equal comfort. So, at the end of life, the master and servant will be equally accountable to Him who is Lord of all. The property will be all gone. Another question to each will be, What use have you made of it? Hand over the account. I shall have a long account to render, my servant a short one."

We are bound to be the almoners of God's bounty, not tax-gatherers to take away what little others have. As a father stands within the midst of his household and says, "What is best for my children?" so we are to stand in the world and say, "What is best for my brotherhood?" "What can I do for others?"

Envy the Righteous (851).

The older I grow, the less I care for the distinction of men, indeed I hold absolutely as valueless any distinction which wealth or influence gives. But I envy the man who knows more about God than I and who lives in closer communion and fellowship than I.—Pickell.

SERVICE LXIII (11).

Notable Events.

Jesus and Caste.—Luke 19: 1-10.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Jesus and Caste.

I. Jesus is ever seeking a dwelling place. Where? In the hearts and homes of all sinful men—even the outcast. How? By coming himself and sending others. When? At all times—immediately—in urgent need. "Make haste"—"Today I must abide."

II. When Jesus is received into the heart and home, a revelation of sin and self—one's relation to others follows as in the case of Zaccheus.

III. Where Jesus dwells there is haste to make all wrong things right—"I give half to the poor; I restore fourfold."

IV. Jesus' seal of approval—"This day is salvation come to this house."

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Why was Zaccheus so anxious to see Jesus?

What was Jesus' purpose in going to the home of Zaccheus?

Which would be the hardest to do of the two things proposed by Zaccheus?

Is the judgment of this crowd ever repeated today?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Friend of Rich Malefactors. (852)—Zaccheus was a Jew. A Jew and a tax-gatherer, he was doubly odious in the eyes of his countrymen. He had heard the fame of Jesus, and what appealed to him most would not be the miracles of the wondrous prophet but his kindness to the outcasts. He was nicknamed "the Friend of Tax-gatherers and Sinners," and he actually admitted a couple of tax-gatherers into the company of his disciples.

It was at once an answer to the crowd and a vow to the Lord. And truly it was a heroic restitution to which Zaccheus pledged himself, far exceeding the legal requirement and evincing his utter penitence and his absolute determination to

lead thenceforth a new life. The law claimed only a fifth for the poor, but he vowed a half. In cases of fraud the offender was required to restore the amount and a fifth more; but he vowed, as in the case of theft, four-fold restitution. Already he was a new creature, and the heart of Jesus rejoiced.

One would fain know what passed betwixt Jesus and Zaccheus in the course of that Sabbath which they spent together—the last Sabbath of the Lord's earthly life; but, in the providence of God, it is unrecorded, and the tax-gatherer appears no more on the page of history.—David Smith.

Jesus Saw What He Could Be. (853)—Jesus did not despise him; what mattered then the contempt of the multitude? As all that was base in him would have been driven into defiance by contempt and hatred, so all that was noble was evoked by a considerate tenderness. And, therefore, he uttered the vow which, by one high act of magnanimity, at once attested his penitence and sealed his forgiveness. This great sacrifice of that which had hitherto been dearest to him, this public confession and public restitution, should be a pledge to his Lord that his grace had not been given in vain. Thus did love unseal by a single touch those swelling fountains of penitence which contempt would have kept closed forever! Looking on the publican, thus ennobled by that instant renunciation of the fruits of sin, which is the truest test of a genuine repentance, our Lord said, "Now is salvation come to this house, since he, too, is"—in the true spiritual sense, not in the idle, boastful, material sense alone —"a son of Abraham."—F. W. Farrar.

Dissatisfied Rich. (854)—And yet Zaccheus was in the crowd that had come to see Jesus. What had brought him? Certainly, not curiosity only. Was it the long working of conscience; or a dim, scarcely self-avowed hope of something better; or had he heard him before; or of him, that he was so unlike those harsh leaders and teachers of Israel, who refused all hope on earth and in heaven to such as him, that Jesus received —nay, called to him the publicans and sinners? Or was it only the nameless, deep, irresistible inward drawing of the Holy Ghost, which may perhaps have brought us, as it has brought many, we know not why nor how, to the place and hour of eternal decision for God, and of infinite grace to our souls?—Edersheim.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Seeking the Lost (855).

An enthusiastic antiquarian standing amid the fragments of an ancient temple, surrounded by dust and moss, broken pillar and defaced architecture, with magnificent projects in his mind of restoring all this to its former majesty, to draw out to light from mere rubbish the ruined glories, and therefore stooping down among the dark ivy and the rank nettles—such is Christ's work amongst the wreck of human nature.—F. W. Robertson.

The Spirit of God lies all about the spirit of man like a mighty sea, ready to rush in at the smallest chink in the walls that shut him out from his own.—George Macdonald.

Souls have to be won, and this requires a winning way—a kind of winsomeness—in those who seek them. The passing of Jesus through the country was like the passing of a magnet over a floor where there are pieces of iron; it drew the seeking souls to himself.—J. Stalker.

Dr. Johnson once observed that "Christianity must go forth in quest of human nature, for human nature unassisted would never go forth in quest of Christianity."

Jesus at the Door (856).

There is a beautiful Oriental custom that tells the story of Christ's atonement on the Cross very clearly. When a debt had to be settled, either by full payment or forgiveness, it was the custom for the creditor to take the canceled bond and nail it over the door of him that had owed it, that all passersby might see that it was paid. Oh, blessed story of our remission! There is the Cross, the door of grace, behind which a bankrupt world lies in hopeless debt to the law. See Jesus, our Surety, coming forth with the long list of our indebtedness in his hand. He lifts it up where God and angels and men see it, and then as the nail goes through his hand, it goes through the bond of our transgressions to cancel it, forever "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us." He "took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."

The Gospel of Labor (857).

But I think the King of that country comes out from His tireless host,
And walks in this world of the weary as if he loves it the most;

And here in the dusty confusion, with eyes that are heavy and dim,
He meets again the laboring men who are looking and longing for him.

He cancels the curse of Eden, and brings them a blessing instead,
Blessed are they that labor, for Jesus partakes of their bread.
He puts his hand to their burdens, he enters their homes at night;
Who does his best shall have as guest the Master of life and of light.

And courage will come with His presence, and patience return at his touch,
And manifold sins be forgiven to those who love him much;
And the cries of envy and anger will change to the songs of cheer,
For the toiling age will forget its rage when the Prince of Peace draws near.

This is the gospel of labor—ring it, ye bells of the kirk—
The Lord of Love came down from above to live with the men who work.
This is the rose that he planted here in the thorn-cursed soil—
Heaven is blest with perfect rest, but the blessing of earth is toil.

—Henry Van Dyke.

Confession and Restitution (858).

The legend says that a sinner being at confession, the devil appeared, saying that he had come to make restitution. Being asked what he would restore he said, "Shame; for it is shame that I have stolen from this sinner, to make him shameless in sinning; and now I have come to restore it to him to make him ashamed to confess his sins."

Two went to pray? Oh! rather say
One went to brag, the other to pray.

One stands up close and treads on high
Where the other dares not lend his eye.

One nearer to God's altar trod,
The other, to the altar's God.—Crashaw.

SERVICE LXIV (12).

Notable Events.

Jesus and laws of life.—Mark 12: 28-34.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Law of Life is the Law of Love.

I. Love to God—With all the heart, the feelings and affections going out toward him for what he is; with all the soul—consciousness of both body and spirit acknowledging him in holy fear and reverence; with all the mind—human will obedient, directed by divine will—love is fulfilling the law; with all thy strength—all service given with an eye single to his glory.

II. Love to man—as thyself—always seeking to provide for others needs—always desiring best welfare of others.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Was the scribe's question a sincere one?

What did he understand by the "first commandment?"

What is comprehended in the word love?

What was the real value of "burnt offerings and sacrifices?"

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Gist of Commandments. (859)—Jesus taught not that any one commandment was greater or smaller, heavier or lighter, than another, but that all sprang from these two as their root and principle, and stood in living connection with them; that all Revelation was one connected whole; not disjointed ordinances of which the letter was to be weighed, but a life springing from love to God and love to man. So noble was the answer, that for the moment the generous enthusiasm of the Scribe, who had previously been favorably impressed by Christ's answer to the Sadducees, was kindled. For the moment, at least, traditionalism lost its sway, and, as Christ pointed to it, he saw the exceeding moral beauty of the Law. He was not far from the Kingdom of God. Whether or not he ever actually entered it, is written on the yet unread page of its history.—Edersheim.

Obedience to God. (860)—None of them had realized the great principle, that the willful violation of one commandment is the transgression of all, because the object of the entire Law is the spirit of obedience to God. On the question proposed by the lawyer the Shammaites and Hillelites were in discord, and,

as usual, both schools were wrong: the Shammaites, in thinking that mere trivial external observances were valuable, apart from the spirit in which they were performed, and the principle which they exemplified; the Hillelites, in thinking that any positive command could in itself be unimportant, and in not seeing that great principles are essential to the due performance of even the slightest duties.—F. W. Farrar.

Translating Thoughts to Action. (861)—How many of us have true thoughts concerning God's law and what it requires, which ought, in all reason, to have brought us to the consciousness of our own sin, and are yet untouched by one pang of penitence! How many of us have lying in our heads, like unused furniture in a lumber-room, what we suppose to be beliefs of ours, which only need to be followed out to their necessary results to refurnish with a new equipment the whole of our religious thinking! How few of us do really take pains to bring our beliefs into clear sunlight, and to follow them wherever they lead us! There is no commoner fault, and no greater foe, than the hazy, lazy half-belief, of which its owner neither knows the grounds nor perceives the intellectual or the practical issues.—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

A Prayer (862).

Our Father, we want to make our lives beautiful. We want to live so that none can justly blame us. We represent Christ, and we would have our lives shine with the beauty of Christ. Show us our faults and help us to get rid of them. Fill us so full of thy Spirit, that in all our dispositions and acts and tempers and words, we will reveal the loveliness that is in our Master. We ask in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Pattern for Our Love (863).

It is a solemn obligation, which may well make us tremble, that is laid on us in these words: "As I have loved you." Calvary was less than twenty-four hours off, and Christ says to us, "That is your pattern!" Contrast our love at its height with his—a drop to an ocean, a poor little flickering rushlight held up beside the sun. My love, at its best, has so far conquered my selfishness that now and then I am ready to suffer a little inconvenience, to sacrifice a little leisure, to give away a little money, to spend a little dribble of sympathy upon the people who are its objects. Christ's love nailed him to the Cross, and

led him down from the throne, and shut for a time the gates of the glory behind him. And he says, "That is your pattern!" —Alexander Maclaren.

Making Others Happy (864).

"When one can't have his own way," says a cheerful thinker, "he may help the other person to have his way." Our own happiness isn't any more important than the next man's; and it is great fun helping other people to be happy—so much fun that we very soon forget to be miserable because some personal joy is denied us, and "look on the things of others" instead.

Day's Wishes (865).

"Monday, I wish for eager feet,
On errands of love to go;
Tuesday, I wish for gentle voice,
With a tone both soft and low;
Wednesday, I wish for willing hands,
Love's duties all to do;
Thursday, I wish for open ears.
Wise words to listen to;
Friday, I wish for a smiling face,
A brightener of home to be;
Saturday, I wish for quickened eyes,
God's beauty all to see;
Sunday, I wish for a tranquil heart,
That may to others joy impart."

Not Both (866).

"We two can't be happy living together," said a woman, speaking of herself and a relative with whom circumstances compelled the sharing of her home. "I've given up trying, for my part."

"Yes, I suppose that is all that you can do," agreed the friend in whom she was confiding. "If you can't both be happy there doesn't seem to be any way left for you but to make her as happy as you can, and give up trying for your own part."

The tone sounded sympathetic, the words seemed to be a repetition of the ones her own lips had just spoken, but the complainer of domestic infelicity flashed upon her companion a startled, half-questioning glance, dropped the subject, and went thoughtfully upon her homeward way, not quite sure whether she had met a case of innocent misapprehension or a new recipe for shaping her life.

SERVICE LXV (13).

Notable Events.

We would see Jesus.—John 12: 20-26.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Coming of the Greeks to Jesus.

I. Contrast the effect of the Triumphal Entry upon the Jews and Greeks. The Pharisees, saying "Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing, the whole world has gone after Him;" the Greeks, "We would" (that is, desire) "to see Jesus."

II. Jesus knew that this reception by Jew and Gentile meant his appointed time was approaching, and being sought by the Gentiles must have been part of the "joy set before him."

III. The multitude who greeted Christ with "Hosanna" is a type of the world applauding one day—yelling "Crucify!" the next. The Pharisees are the self-righteous, envious bigots wedded to themselves and their own views—hating all else. The Greeks voice the desire of every contrite sinner and earnest Christian. Let us pray the Holy Spirit now—"We would see Jesus?"

IV. Disciples led Greeks to Jesus.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Who were these Greeks?

Is there any parallel to their desire at the present day?

What class of present-day Christians do Andrew and Philip represent?

What is the thought behind this paradox that "he that loveth his life loseth it?"

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Son of Man. (869)—Not now in the stable of Bethlehem, but in the Temple, are "the wise men," the representatives of the Gentile world, offering their homage to the Messiah. But the life which had then begun was now all behind him—and yet, in a sense, before him. The hour of decision was about to strike. Not merely as the Messiah of Israel, but in his world-wide bearing as "the Son of Man," was he about to be glorified by receiving the homage of the Gentile world, of which the symbol and the first fruits were now before him. But only in one way could

he thus be glorified: by dying for the salvation of the world, and so opening the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.—Edersheim.

Jew to Gentile. (870)—It filled his heart with much-needed joy, to welcome men who must have seemed to him an earnest of his future triumphs, among the great heathen nations. As Bengel says, "it was the prelude of the transition of the Kingdom of God from the Jew to the Gentile."—Geikie.

Time Fully Come. (871)—It is not man who determines what truths shall present themselves to this or that age, or under what aspects; and until the time has come for the new truth or the new aspect, they are presented unsatisfactorily or in vain.—Matthew Arnold.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Attractive Power of Jesus (872).

If flowers are placed in a window, the window closed, and the blinds drawn, the bees outside are aware of the presence of the flowers, and beat against the window-panes in the effort to reach them. This "action at a distance" is more wonderful in the case of Christ. When he entered a house the sorrowful discovered his locality and rested not until they gained the Plant of Renown whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.—W. L. Watkinson.

"Come," says the sea to the river. "Come," says the magnet to the steel. "Come," says the spring to the sleeping life of the forest. And like the obedience of the river to the sea, the steel to the stone, the earth's atoms to the spring's call, so the obedience of the soul to Christ.—Stanford.

All great souls attract smaller souls. Strength is an irresistible magnet to weakness. Every good impulse in a sinner's heart, however weak it may be, is drawn by admiration and love to the strong-hearted Christian, and to Christ himself.

LIFE'S REMEDY (873).

The world is weary of new tracks of thought
That lead to naught;
Sick of quack remedies prescribed in vain
For mortal pain;
Yet still above them all One Figure stands
With outstretched Hands.

Man's ears are deafened with conflicting cries:
"Here wisdom lies!"
"Here rest and peace are found!" Lo here, lo there.
Are all things fair!
Yet still One Voice repeats the tender Plea:
"Come unto Me!"

Fools stumble on strange paths their fathers trod
In search of God,
But found him not, and in the defeat died
Unsatisfied;
Yet now, as then, One ceases not to say:
"I am the Way."

Would-be philosophers make blind our eyes
With sophistries,
And bid our faith by science stand appalled
(Falsely so called);
Yet still ring out those words of tender truth:
"I am the Truth."

Men seek in vain some charm whereby to flee
Mortality—
Some magic potion which to them shall give
The power to live;
Yet still One Message sounds above the strife:
"I am the Life."

—Ellen Thornycroft Fowler.

Jews Coming to Christ (874).

Dr. Ignatz Zalson, of Wein, Austria, the well-known learned Jew, and author of a book on the Jewish race, has in a lecture brought out startling figures about the number of Jews that have been baptized in the last one hundred years. He has shown through statistics that, in the 100 years which closed 10 years ago, not less than 204,000 Jews left their religion and went over to Christianity. These fallen away Jews were 22,000 in Germany, 28,000 in England and her colonies, 44,000 in Austria-Hungary, 84,000 in Russia, and 13,000 in America * * * The number of Jews accepting Christianity increase every year. In the year 1890, 300 Jews in one city left their religion and were baptized as Christians, while in 1904, 600 Jews became Christians in the same city.—Missionary Review of the World.

Trying To Come To Christ (875).

"Have you come to Christ?" said a minister one day to a thoughtful lad. "No; but I'm trying," was the answer. "And how long are you to try before you come?" "I don't know; I am doing what I can." Christ says "Come."

As they were bidding each other good-bye, the minister said, "Will you come and see me soon and let me know how you are?" "I'll try to come some day." "No," said the minister, "you are not to try, but to come." He smiled as they parted, at the illustration he himself had given of the difference between trying and coming.

Seeking Earnestly (876).

Many years ago a young girl in Skye thought that God was not in her native island, so she must go seeking until she found him.

She left home; her friends, thinking her demented, made no effort to bring her back, so she wandered, asking everyone whom she met where she might find God, for he was not in her country. When she reached Inverness, a lady, struck by her earnest manner, took her home and then to church. For the first time she heard the "good news" and it brought peace and blessing to her soul.

SERVICE LXVI. (14)

Parables of Jesus.

Sowing the Seed.—Mark 4: 1-9.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Hearers of the Word.

I. Wayside hearers. Those who hear the word accidentally—Passing thoughts soon catch it away.

II. Stony ground hearers—Sudden response to truth and swift decay—Take up with novelties, given to change—want of root—no depth of character—lack of thought.

III. Thorny-ground hearers—Worldly Christians are the thorn patch of the field who meet to criticize sermons, dispute doctrine or make one-sided applications of truth—choked by other thoughts so seed has no chance to develop.

IV. Good-ground hearers—Those who hear intelligently—apply in practice and are fruitful.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What determines the result, the sower, the seed or the soil?

How does Satan destroy the influence of the truth in the lives of men?

When does a man have "no root in himself?"

What things in our present age are the "thorns that choke the word?"

What is good ground for gospel sowing?

What is an honest and good heart in an unconverted man?

What are the qualities that are essential to usefulness in an individual life?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Christ's Words Wasted. (877)—It was not because Jesus may have seen a sower in a field which had these three varieties of soil that he spoke, but because he saw the frivolous crowd gathered to hear his words. The full force and pathos of the parable is felt when it is regarded as the expression of our Lord's keen consciousness of his wasted words.

Inasmuch as a parable is the presentation of some spiritual truth under the guise of an incident belonging to the material sphere, it follows that it may either reveal or hide the truth, and

that it will do the former to susceptible, and that latter to unsusceptible, souls. This double aspect belongs to all revelation, but is most conspicuous in the parable, which careless listeners may take for a mere story, and which those who feel and see more deeply will apprehend in its depth.

The types of character represented are unreceptive carelessness, emotional facility of acceptance, and earthly-mindedness.

There is nothing fixed or necessary in the faults of these three classes, and they are not so much the characteristics of separate types of men as evils common to all hearers, against which all have to guard. They depend upon the will and affections much more than on anything in temperament fixed and not to be got rid of. So there is no reason why any one of the three should not become "good soil;" and it is to be noted that the characteristic of that soil is simply that it receives and grows the seed.

No man is obliged, by temperament or circumstances to be "wayside," or "stony," or "thorny" ground. Wherever a heart opens to receive the gospel, and keeps it fast, there the increase will be realized—not in equal measure in all, but in each according to faithfulness and diligence—Maclaren.

The Bearers to Blame. (878)—If the ground was good and the sower and the seeds all alike, why did it bear here an hundred-fold, here sixty-fold, and here thirty-fold? The difference was due to the nature of the ground; for even where the ground was good, the difference in it was great. You see, it is not the husbandman that is to blame, nor the seeds, but the land that receives them. And here, too, the philanthropy is great, because God does not require one measure of excellence, but receives the first, and does not reject the second, and gives the third a place. —Chrysostom.

Service of All Required. (879)—Believers have not all equal capacities or endowments, but it is enough that each should do what lies within him and prove faithful to the trust committed to him, employing his faculties, whatever they may be, with diligent hand and devoted heart. There is room in the kingdom of heaven not only for a St. John and a St. Paul but for the nameless multitude that love the Lord and serve him loyally in their obscure places.—David Smith.

Sowing Seed (881).

In October, 1841, George Selwyn, newly elected missionary Bishop of New Zealand, preached a sermon in an English church, presenting the claims of the heathen. A little boy, unnoticed in the throng, was inspired with missionary zeal by it, and later became the famous Bishop Patteson, the noble missionary martyr.

Hearing the Word (882).

A Home Department Visitor read this lesson and discussed it with a member of her class. "You needn't tell me where I belong," said the woman. "I've classified myself as Stony-ground."

Seed Sowing and Harvest (883).

One night a young doctor strayed into the tabernacle where D. L. Moody was preaching. When he came out he resolved to make his religion practical. He had a medical education, he was fond of the sea, and he determined to combine them with some definite Christian work. He joined the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen and helped to establish the medical mission to the fishermen of the North Sea. In 1892, Dr. Grenfell crossed the Atlantic to do a similar work in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Not long before Mr. Moody's death, Dr. Grenfell met him and thanked him for his sermon. "What have you been doing since?" was Mr. Moody's prompt and searching question. There is much fruit from that sermon. Along two thousand miles of inhospitable coast Dr. Grenfell relieves the suffering. He has established three hospitals, makes his rounds in summer with a steamer and in winter goes with dog-teams and sled, practicing medicine for the love of God in freezing Labrador.

Secret of Booker Washington's Power (884).

In his autobiography "Up from Slavery," Booker T. Washington says: "Miss Nathalie Lord, one of the teachers, from Portland, Me., taught me how to use and love my Bible. Before this I had never cared a great deal about it. The lessons taught me in this respect took such hold upon me that at the present time, I always make it a rule to read a portion before beginning the work of the day. Whatever ability I may have as a public speaker I owe to Miss Lord."

The seed sown by a teacher's hand has borne fruit in Tuskegee with its wide influence, many hundred fold.

SERVICE LXVII (15).

Parables of Jesus.

Seven-Time Forgiveness.—Matt. 18: 21-35.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The account rendered. I. The Sinner's liabilities; (1) The amount—inconceivably great; (2) Circumstances under which it accumulated—living for self, misapplying the King's revenue. II. The Sinner's Assets, nothing! yet sometimes a boast of solvency—a few good things in the past, and purposes in future, unrealized property. III. The sinner's proposal; (1) Does not dispute the claim; (2) Owns the justice of debt; (3) Presumptuous self-confidence—"I will pay thee all." IV. The King's mercy.—Biblical Encyclopedia.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What is the real significance of the "seventy times seven?"

What is the Lord's attitude to mankind, as pictured here?

Do present-day facts confirm or repudiate this picture of man's attitude towards his brother?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Merciful As He Is Merciful. (885)—Does this parable have any bearing on the relations between rich and poor, educated and ignorant, in the social life of today?

Now, it is to be noticed at the very outset that the analogy between debt and sin, though real, is extremely imperfect. No metaphor of that sort goes on all fours, and there has been a great deal of harm done to theology and to evangelical religion by carrying out too completely the analogy between money debts and our sins against God. But although the analogy is imperfect it is very real. The first point is the magnitude of every man's transgressions against God. For the essence of sin is rebellion against God and the enthroning of self as his victorious rival. It may be a small act; it is a great sin.

Our Lord here implies the principle that God's mercy to us is to set the example to which our dealings with others is to be conformed. "Even as I had mercy on thee" plainly proposes that miracle of divine forgiveness as our pattern as well as our hope. The world's morality recognizes the duty of forgiveness.

Christ shows us God's forgiveness as at once the model which is the perfect realization of the idea in its completeness and inexhaustibleness, and also the motive which, brought into our experience, inclines and enables us to forgive.

The unmercifulness of Christian people is a worse sin than many a deed that goes by very ugly names amongst men.

Here are the two lessons for every one of us. First, to recognize our debt, and go to Him in whom God is well pleased, for its abolishment and forgiveness; and then to go out into the world, and live like him, and show to others love kindled by and kindred to that to which we trust for our own salvation.—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

An Unforgiving Spirit (886).

I once talked a long time to a young lady, trying to lead her to Christ, but at last she said, "There are persons I cannot forgive." I told her, "You must, or be lost forever." But she replied, "I cannot; they have done me a wrong." I said, "If they had not done you a wrong, there wouldn't be anything to forgive. Have they wronged you as much as you have wronged Jesus Christ? Read Matt. 18:23 and you must forgive." But she said, "I can't." "Are you willing," I then asked her, "that God should take the bitterness out of your heart?" She replied, "I am." Then I said, "Kneel down and ask him." Scarcely had her knees touched the floor when she burst into tears, the feeling of hate had left her.—Current Anecdotes.

Forgiveness (887).

A distinguished Christian worker, a lady, tells this story: "A lady, closely veiled, came to see me. She was young and beautiful, and had three little children, one an infant in arms. Her case was one of the saddest to which I have ever listened, and I have heard thousands. She and her innocent child were suffering beyond language to describe through the sins of another. She was very bitter. A struggle followed, and then a perfectly divine influence filled the room, and a divine presence, when that little wife and mother prayed 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.' The hatred had gone; she had peace; such peace that her whole face beamed as she left me."—Current Anecdotes.

Forgive and Forget (888).

We often hear people say, "I will forgive it, but I never can forget it." All such forgiveness is false. There really is no forgiving without forgetting. Here is a little story which illustrates very well: "I am sorry that you and Hal are not such good friends as you used to be," said George Herbert's father. "Have you quarreled?" "Not exactly, but he treated me in a mean, shabby way a while ago and we've never been as good friends since." "Wasn't he sorry? Did he never ask your pardon? I thought Hal was unusually ready to acknowledge himself in fault." "Oh, he said he was sorry and he did ask my pardon." "You surely did not refuse it?" "Of course not, father, but then I can't forget it, you know." "The same old story, my son," said the father, gravely. "What is pardon worth that still keeps the offence in angry remembrance?"

Prayer of the Unforgiving Man (889).

"'O God, I have sinned against thee many times; I have been often forgetful of thy goodness; I have broken thy laws; I have committed many secret sins. Deal with me, I beseech thee, O Lord, even as I deal with my neighbor. He hath not offended me one hundredth part as much as I have offended thee, but I cannot forgive him. He has been very ungrateful to me, though not an hundredth part as ungrateful as I have been to thee, yet I cannot overlook such base ingratitude. Deal with me, O Lord, I beseech thee, as I deal with him. I remember and treasure up every little trifle which shows how ill he has behaved to me. Deal with me, I beseech thee, O Lord, as I deal with him.' Can anything be more shocking and horrible than such a prayer? Yet this is just the prayer the unforgiving man offers up every time he repeats the Lord's prayer."—Archbishop Augustus Hare.

SERVICE LXVIII (16).

Parables of Jesus.

Who is my neighbor?—Luke 10:25-37.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Love to our Neighbor—Assumes diverse forms: I. In a family it is tenderness and care. II. In a neighborhood, courtesy. III. In friendship, sympathy. IV. In business, integrity. V. In distress, mercy. VI. To our country, patriotism. VII. To the world, benevolence. VIII. To the church, brotherly kindness.—Van Doren.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What answers have been given in the past to the lawyer's question?

What varying answers are men giving today?

What relation is there between belief and action?

When does belief control action?

What expresses our real belief, our words or our deeds?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Healing and Helping a Universal Language. (890)—The good Samaritan wasted no needless sympathy, he shed no idle tears. There are wounds that may be dressed—he puts forth his own hand to the dressing of them. There is a life that may be saved—he sets himself to use every method by which it may be saved. He gives more than time, more than money: he gives personal service. And that is the true human charity that shows itself in prompt, efficient, self-forgetful, self-sacrificing help.

Of all influences that have ever descended upon our earth, none has ever done so much as Christianity to break down the walls of separation that differences of country, language, race, religion, have raised between man and man, and to diffuse the spirit of that brotherly love which overleaps all temporary fences, which diffuses itself everywhere over the broad field of humanity—tempering all, uniting all, brightening all, smoothing asperities, harmonizing discords, pouring a healing balm into all the bleeding sores of life.—Hanna.

Heart and Hand Religion. (891)—Our Saviour hath, therefore, by this parable, shown that the heart is the seat of genuine grace, and that good principles will ever produce great actions. —Fleetwood.

Whose Neighbor Am I? (892)—This is truly a gospel parable, for the whole old relationship of mere duty is changed into one of love. The question now is not "Who is my neighbor?" but "Whose neighbor am I?" The gospel answers the question of duty by pointing us to love. Wouldst thou know who is thy neighbor? Become a neighbor to all by the utmost service thou canst do them in their need. And so the gospel would not only abolish man's enmity, but bridge over man's separation. Thus is the parable truly Christian, and, more than this, points up to Him who, in our great need, became neighbor to us, even at the cost of all he had. And from him, as well as by his word, are we to learn our lesson of love.—Edersheim.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Our Neighbors (893).

A gentleman once said to Dr. Skinner, who was asking aid for foreign missions, "I don't believe in foreign missions. I want what I give to benefit my neighbors." "Who are your neighbors?" "Why, those around me." "Do you mean those whose land joins yours?" "Yes." "Well," said Dr. Skinner, "how much land do you own?" "Five hundred acres." "How far down do you own it?" "Why, I never thought of that before. I suppose half way through." "Exactly, and I want this money for the Chinese, the men whose land joins yours at the bottom." To a believer in Christ all men are neighbors.

Where People Are Neighbors (894).

The following story is told of Henry Grady, the famous Southern editor. As he was leaving his boarding-house in New York one morning he saw a hearse standing in front of the next house. "Who is dead?" Grady asked his landlady. "Sure, I don't know," was her reply in such a tone of indifference that it fell like a clod on the heart of the sympathetic young Southerner, who had sorrowed from his youth up in every grief coming into the family of a neighbor. As he started off, a little coffin was borne down the steps, followed by a mother who was crying as if her heart would break. He turned and asked his landlady if she were going to the funeral. "Sure, it's none of my affair." This seeming heartlessness made such an impression on Grady that he said to his wife, "Pack your trunks. I'm going back to Georgia, where people have time to shed a tear with their neighbor when death removes their child.

SERVICE LXIX (17).

Parables of Jesus.

The Foolish Man.—Luke 12: 16-21.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Foolish Man. I. He lived as though God were not. Psa. 53: 1. II. Spent the strength of his life on things that perish—that do not satisfy—he craved more. III. His spirit of greed that wanted to have and to hold all he could acquire for self. IV. He was totally unprepared to meet the real issues of life, death and eternity.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What is this man's ideal?
What are the ideals of men today?
How far had this man taken God into account?
What was the secret of his life?
How may one be rich toward God?
Is covetousness a vice of the rich only?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Reckoned without God. (897)—As yet, the harvest was not reaped; but he was already considering what to do, reckoning upon the riches that would come to him. And so he resolved to pull down the old, and build larger barns, where he would store his future possessions. From one aspect there would have been nothing wrong in an act of almost necessary foresight—only great folly in thinking, and speaking, and making plans, as if that were already absolutely his which might never come to him at all, which was still unreaped, and might be garnered long after he was dead. But, God was not in all his thoughts. In all his plans for the future he thought not of God. His whole heart was set on the acquisition of earthly riches. He remembered not his responsibility; all that he had, was for himself, and absolutely his own, to batten upon; "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry." He did not even remember that there was a God who might cut short his years.—Edersheim.

Neglected God. (899)—Jesus does not represent this husbandman as in any respects a wicked man. He was rich, but in that there was no wrong. Nay, it was rather to his credit that

he had made so much of his farm. There is no suggestion that he had amassed his wealth unrighteously, by keeping back the hire of his laborers or withholding his corn from the market and selling it at famine-price. All that is charged against him is that he had been so taken up with worldly affairs that he had neglected the great concerns; he had left out of his reckoning the supreme facts—God, death, judgment, eternity. He seemed to the world and to himself a shrewd, clever man, yet in God's sight he was a fool, and he discovered at the last that he made a fool's bargain.

All those years he had been building a palace for his soul, and he was surveying it with pride when a breath out of eternity blew upon it, and it collapsed like a house of cards. He said to his soul: "Soul, thou hast many good things laid up for many years. Take thine ease, eat, drink, make merry." But God said to him: "Thou fool! this night thy soul is required from thee; and the things which thou hast prepared—who shall have them." His heirs mayhap would quarrel over them like those two brothers whose dispute about their inheritance had occasioned the parable.—David Smith.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Lost By Greed (900).

An eagle was seen on a cake of ice floating in the river above Niagara Falls, feeding on a dead lamb. A sleet was falling at the time, freezing as it fell.

The unconscious eagle intent upon its meal, surveyed the scene, not aware of approaching danger, yet nothing daunted, expecting to escape the threatening flood by flight.

The cake of ice was born into the current, nearest the rapids, and then the Falls. The eagle crouched to mount into the air, but its feathers were congealed into fetters. The harmless mist had frozen into bands of ice while the eagle was feeding in security on earthly things. Nearing the brink, the awful moment came, when with frantic fright it strove to force the pinions, but it was bound; and with a cry of terror, plunged into the merciless abyss.

Dwarf Sins (901).

The love of money was the cause of the downfall of Judas. There is an Indian story of a dwarf who asked a king to give him all the ground he could cover with three strides. The king, seeing him so small, said, "Certainly," Whereupon the dwarf

suddenly shot up into a tremendous giant, covering all the land with the first stride, all the water with the second, and with the third he knocked the king down and took his throne.

"'Who is it knocks so loud?' 'A little lonely sin.'
'Slip through,' we answer, and all hell is in."

Our Weak Sides (902).

Everyone has a weak side—the wise man as well as the fool. But the difference between the two is that the wise man sets a double guard on his weak side, and keeps it there, while the fool lets his weakness go unguarded and open for the next temptation that attacks. All good generals fortify the weak spot in their defenses.

The Poor Millionaire (903).

There are no men more interesting to talk to than the faithful pilgrims who go about the country asking rich men to give money to colleges. I talked with one of the "best in the business," says a writer in the Interior, on a recent day of relaxation. He said:

"I have been out on a trip of six weeks. I should say that in that time I have talked with at least sixty men worth between one hundred thousand and five millions. Out of all of them I do not think there is a single one who has any time to devote to church work, although they are all church members. Their business completely consumes them. They don't get through with that except by stealing time that they need for sleep. None of them sleeps as much as a man ought to.

"I have heard business men in the smaller cities say they were busy. In fact, they don't know what it is to be busy. Nobody knows but the men who are in the grip of big business in the great cities. There you find men driven with the most merciless whip that ever fell on any human back—not the employees, but the employers. They hate the bondage of it—many of them do, at least—but they can't get away. One man almost pathetically told me he hated it all. But he compared himself to a man hugging a bear—it was terrible to hold on but he didn't dare to let go.

"I tell you there is no fun in being a millionaire."

The Iron Wolf (904).

"I conducted two years ago," said a clergyman, "the funeral service of one of my parishioners. He had been a farmer. Forty

years ago he commenced work with one hundred acres of land, and he ended with the same hundred. He was a skillful, industrious, working man, but he had laid by no money in the bank. I understood the reason as I listened to the comments of his neighbors.

"'So poor Gould is dead! He left a poor account—not a penny more than he got from his father. Now I started with nothing; and look here,' pointing to his broad fields, 'I own down to the stream. D'ye know why?

"'When I started to keep house I brought this into it the first thing,' taking an iron savings bank, in the shape of a wolf, out of the closet. 'Every penny I could save went into his jaws.

"'My purpose was to die worth twenty thousand pounds. Other folks dressed their wives in merino; mine wore calico. Other men wasted their money on education; my boys and girls learned to work early and keep it up late. I wasted no money on churches, sick people, paupers and books.

"'And now I own to the stream; and that land with the fields yonder, and stock in the barns, are worth twenty thousand pounds. Do you see?'

"And on the thin, hard lips was a wretched attempt to laugh. The house was bare and comfortless; his wife, worn out with work, had long ago gone to her grave. Of his children, one daughter was still drudging in the kitchen; one son had taken to drink, and died in prison. The other, a harder miser than his father, remained at home to fight with him over every penny wrung out of their fertile fields.

"And yesterday I buried this man," continued the clergyman. "Neither neighbor nor friend, son nor daughter, shed a tear over him. His children were eager to begin the quarrel for the ground he had sacrificed his life to earn. Of it all he had now only enough to cover his decaying body.

"Economy to a noble purpose is a virtue; but miserliness devours intelligence, religion, hope and life itself."—The Cottager and Artisan.

SERVICE LXX (18).

Parables of Jesus.

Lame Excuses.—Luke 14: 15-24.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Gospel provision. I. The Gospel feast: (1) Gratuitous; (2) Abundant; (3) Suitable; (4) Satisfactory. II. The invitation: (1) It is urgent—come with an appetite; (2) It is comprehensive—come with large expectation. III. The reason annexed: (1) The entertainer; (2) The entertainment.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What is the force of the exclamation with which one of the fellow-guests interrupts Jesus' remarks? On what grounds is the kingdom of heaven represented as a feast.

What attitude of mind lies back of these excuses?

Were these things that kept the guests away, wicked acts?

How was the servant to "constrain" the new guests?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Jesus Rebuked Lip-Service. (905)—With trenchant table-talk Jesus enlivened the banquet, and one of the company, thinking to pass off its keen edge ejaculated: "Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God!" It was a mere religious commonplace, and hardly anything was more distasteful to Jesus than pious talk which was mere breath, and he answered that sententious ejaculation at the Pharisee's table with a scathing parable of a man making a great supper. The excuses, at all events, the first and second, were palpable pretexts. The men simply did not wish to come, and each pled the first excuse that occurred to him. Their language was exceedingly polite, but that was no extenuation, it was rather an aggravation, of the insolence of their behavior. What worth is there in lip-homage? —David Smith.

Disliked Host. (906)—To come to that feast, to enter into the Kingdom, implies the giving up of something that seems if not necessary, yet most desirable, and the enjoyment of which appears only reasonable. Be it possession, business, and pleasure, the main point lies in this, that when the time came, they all refused to enter in, each having some valid and reasonable excuse. But the ultimate ground of their refusal was, that they

felt no real reverence for the host; in short, that to them it was not a feast at all, but something much less to be desired than what they had, and would have been obliged to give up, if they had complied with the invitation.—Edersheim.

No Time for Life. (907)—Though men be invited to the greatest feast that heaven can afford, they slight it on some pretence or other. These have their ambition, those their covetousness, a third sort their revenge, a fourth their luxury, to gratify and indulge. They have the cares of this life upon their hands, and in their hearts, too; with which they are so occupied, that there is no room left for the thoughts of another life to come.—Beveridge.

Carelessness. (908)—The excuses show careless unconcern, not hardened wickedness. Business occupations, family ties, and various distractions, are pleaded as excuses for not taking God's summons seriously.—Dummelow.

Compelling. (909)—What can this compelling men to come in mean, save that strong, earnest exhortation, which the ambassadors of Christ will address to men, when they are themselves deeply convinced of the mighty issues which there are for every man, linked with his acceptance or rejection of the gospel? They will speak as delivering the words of him who has a right to be heard by his creatures—who not merely entreats, but commands all men everywhere, to repent and believe the gospel.—Trench.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Excuses of Selfishness (910).

A man who attempted to raise some money for a church out West relates his experience thus: "The first man I met said he was very sorry, but the fact was, he was so involved in his business that he couldn't give anything. Very sorry, but a man in debt as he was owed his first duty to his creditors. He was smoking an expensive cigar, and before I left his store he bought of a peddler who came in a pair of expensive Rocky Mountain cuff buttons.

"The next man I went to was a young clerk in a banking establishment. He read the paper over, acknowledged that the church was needed, but said he was owing for his board, was badly in debt, and did not see how he could give anything. That afternoon, as I went by the baseball grounds, I saw this young man pay fifty cents at the entrance to go in, and saw him mount

the grand stand, where special seats were sold for a quarter of a dollar.

"The third man to whom I presented the paper was a farmer living near the town. He also was sorry, but times were hard, his crops had been a partial failure, the mortgage on his farm was a heavy load, the interest was coming due, and he really could not see his way clear to give to the church, although it was just what the new town needed. A week from that time I saw that same farmer drive into town with his entire family, and go to the circus, afternoon and night, at an expense of at least four dollars.—The Youth's Companion.

Criticism or Invitation (911).

A certain political leader in New York City had been criticized and abused by almost every pastor during fifteen years—how many went to him and preached Jesus. One man did. While Mr. Moody was at the Murray Hill hotel he learned the man was in the house, and went to him with an invitation to attend church, and he urged upon him the importance of personal salvation. No position of great wealth or honor or social standing should prevent us from giving the invitation when the Master says "Go!"

The King's Invitation (912).

When Leonard Woods, president of Bowdoin College, was invited by Louis Phillipe to attend a reception, he did not answer the invitation, but appeared on time at the reception. When the King met him he said he had feared that he would not have the pleasure of Dr. Woods' company, as he had not heard from him in response to the invitation. "We thought," replied Dr. Woods, "that the invitation of a King was to be obeyed, not answered." Christ invites us first of all to come to his feast, that we may have the bread of life, and then take them to others. his invitation is a command; it should be our joy to obey, and nothing should hinder.

A Good Excuse (913).

A converted Japanese pugilist, who had but one suit of clothes, knew a friend who could not go to meeting because he had no clothes. The pugilist gave him his only suit and went to bed himself while his friend went to prayer meeting. The friend is now among the converts.

SERVICE LXXI (19).

Parables of Jesus.

God is Love.—Luke 15: 3-10.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

God is Love. I. Seeks those who need love: (1) Those who have lost their way in life—their heavenly home as the lost sheep; (2) Those who have lost their possessions—lost coin; (3) Those who have lost their birthright—companionsship with their Father and the love of others as the lost son.

II. He seeks that He may confer benefits—guide—restores—welcome.

III. He seeks that He may win man's love to bring him back to obedience and right relationship as a child of God.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

For the purpose of the parable, what is the difference between the lost sheep and the lost coin?

Whose is the blame in each case?

What points of likeness are there between coin and human soul?

What connection is implied between heaven and earth?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

God's Loss. (915)—Even as men sorrow for what they lose, and rejoice when they find it, so God sorrows for lost sinners and rejoices at their recovery.

It was not so much the value of the sheep as the misery of the poor lost creatures that excited the shepherd's solicitude; and Jesus here declares that the sinner's misery moves compassion in the heart of God. It was the value of the drachma, which she could ill afford out of her scanty store that moved the peasant woman; and Jesus here declares that a sinner is precious in God's sight and his loss is a loss to God.

In the third parable he makes a still more amazing declaration. A sinner is not merely a lost possession, he is a lost child of God; and the Father's heart yearns for his recovery.—David Smith.

God's Image. (916)—Christ's incarnation was a girding of himself to go after his lost sheep. His whole life upon earth, his entire walk in the flesh, was a following of the strayed one;

for in his own words this was the very purpose of his coming, namely, "to seek and to save that which was lost." And he sought his own till he found it.

In the one piece of money, which the woman loses out of her ten, expositors have delighted to trace a resemblance to the human soul, which was originally stamped with the image and superscription of the great King and which still retains traces of the mint from which it proceeded, though by sin the image has been nearly effaced, and the superscription has well nigh become illegible. Nor is this all; as the piece of money is lost for all useful purposes to its right owner, so man, through sin, is become unprofitable to God, who has not from him that service which is due.—Trench.

The Woman the Church. (917)—The woman is the Church; the ten pieces of silver are the human souls in her keeping; the lost piece is a soul that has fallen from grace through her negligence. Eager to atone for her neglect, she lights a candle, i. e., vigorously exercises the ministry of the Word. The sweeping of the house is the vehemence with which she sets about her task, thereby incurring the charge of "turning the world upside down."—Dummelow.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

God's Forbearance (918).

A legend says that a murderer came to Abraham's tent and was refused shelter. God appeared to him that night in a dream and said "Could'st thou not bear with him one night? Lo I have borne with him these many years!"

The Wind and the Sun (919).

In the old fable the blowing of the wind only made the traveler draw his cloak more closely about him, but when the sun shone out bright and warm off came his cloak. And so the sinner's heart hard, unmoved when it is touched by God's love melts and goes out in wonder, love and praise toward the Great Giver.

After Moral Wreck (920).

After a man has made a complete moral wreck of himself, what then? To hear people talk, one would get the idea that there is nothing to do then but to let him go, an admitted and abandoned failure. It is fortunate that God does not treat us that way. It was fortunate for the world that he did not treat Judah that way, after she had "gone so far down that she had

to reach up to touch bottom." It was after that that the Remnant was so purified that Jesus Christ could be born from that stock. Out of the complete moral wrecks of the world have come the John B. Goughs, the Jerry McAuleys, the S. H. Hadleys, and tens of thousands of others not less blessed and blessing. If you have a friend or know a man, who has now apparently completed his moral wreckage, this is the time to hold on in undiscouraged, unquenchable faith and prayer. God has not let him go; why should you? The time never comes, if he is still in this life, when you will need to, or have any right to, let go of one whom you have been trying to let Christ save through you. And the same is true of our own moral failures, when we seem to have come to an unrecoverable end in pitiable collapse of character.

"While an hour of life remains,
Life is in the making.—S. S. Times.

The God of Another Chance (921).

A man named Peter stumbled bad,
Lost all love he ever had,
Fouled his own soul's divinest spring,
Cursed, swore, and all that sort of thing;
He got another chance, and then
Reached the far goal of God-like men.

Your boy goes wrong, the same as he
Who fed swine in the far country;
He seems beyond the utmost reach
Of hearts that pray, of lips that preach;
Give him another chance and see
How beautiful his life may be.

God Cares (922).

Winnie had laid away her largest, rosiest apple to give to a sick girl. "What do you do that for?" asked Johnnie.

"Because I want to please God, and he likes me to be kind to sick people."

"Do you think God cares about such little things?" said Johnnie. "Isn't he too busy taking care of big things?

Winnie pointed to mamma, who was just then lifting the baby from the crib. "Do you think that mamma is so busy with the big folks that she forgets the baby? Of course not; she thinks of baby first, because he is so little that he needs her most. Don't you think God knows how to love as well as mothers?"

SERVICE LXXII (20).

Parables of Jesus.

Welcomed by the Father.—Luke 15: 11-24.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Father's welcome. I. Watching for son's return—saw him while a great way off. II. Forgot the past, ran to meet him. III. Sorry for the son's pitiable condition—moved with compassion. IV. Loved him still—fell on his neck—kissed him. V. Rejoiced over his return—commanded a feast. VI. Restored him to his old place—robe—ring—shoes—provided as before for his son.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What bearing has this parable on the problem of the distribution of wealth in the world?

In how many ways do men "waste their substance" in this world?

With what motive did this son return to his father?

With what motives do men go to Church today?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Turns his back on Home. (924)—In the parable of "The Lost Son," the main interest centers in his restoration. It is not now to the innate tendency of his nature, nor yet to the work and dust in the house that the loss is attributable, but to the personal, free choice of the individual. He does not stray; he does not fall aside—he wilfully departs, and under aggravated circumstances.—Edersheim.

Prosperity of the Christians. (925)—His father let him have his portion of the property, to try his unfilial and dismal experiment with it; and so Providence lets irreligious and un-Christian men have money and prosperity, for the same purpose, here. There is something unspeakably pathetic, sad, in the sight of a man, with a heart in his breast which God made, getting worldly success, nothing else, and working this experiment out. The badges of fortune that he hangs out about him, and about his family, are only the mockeries of his mistake. How he is to discover it is only a question of time; and this is partly the sadness of it. Fulness of the intellect, fulness of the estate, will

not keep the sense of hunger away—and the sense of it is the reality of it.—Bishop Huntington.

Pleasure Becomes Master. (926)—Our Lord gives us a hint here of that awful mystery in the downward progress of souls, by which he who begins by using the world to be a servant to minister to his pleasures, submits in the end to a reversing of the relationship between them so that the world uses him as its drudge, and sin as its slave.—Trench.

Direction not Distance. (927)—Distance is not the principal thing; direction is. The first sign and proof of the inward transformation is in the character of the first thought, and desire. Before, it was to get away from the father and forget him; now, it is to get home and abide with him.—Bishop Huntington.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

A Father's Love (928).

A son who had long tried his father with wild, reckless living finally ran away with an amateur actress and from a distant city telegraphed his father of the fact. He was totally incapable of supporting a wife although his father was a man of wealth and much social prominence. When the news came everyone wondered what the father would do. They soon knew for a return dispatch was sent, "Come home.—Father." The son did not live long. His wife was received as an equal, everything done for her that love or kindness could suggest because she was a part of the son's life.

The Father's Kiss (930).

"Do you remember the sermon on 'The Father's Kiss?'" said a man as he thrust his arm into the carriage window at the close of one of my meetings in England. "Do you remember that sermon on 'The Father's Kiss?'" I said. "Yes, I remember it. That sermon saved my soul. God bless you, goodby."

I thought then as I think now a man might preach a hundred sermons on the Prodigal Son and always have conversions.

Home at Last (931).

Out in one of the cemeteries of Winnipeg is a tombstone marking the grave of a man who not until late in life became a Christian, and on the stone is this inscription: "Here lies the son of ——— ———. He was a poor, wandering boy, but he came home at last."

SERVICE LXXIII (21).

Disowned by His Brother.—Luke 15: 25-32.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Elder Son. I. Irritable came in from work—wanted to know what all this feasting and dancing meant. II. Self-righteous—angry that the brother was honored—wouldn't go in and eat with him—"many years do I serve thee" "never transgressed thy commandment." III. Envious "thou never gavest me a kid to make merry with my friends." IV. Jealous—when this thy son came. V. Censorius, implacable, unloving—will not forget the past. VI. Cruel—it means nothing that his brother is alive—he don't want him restored to the old place, it might affect his own interests. VII. Father's rebuke—all that I have is thine—possessions do not matter though—this is a case of life and death.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What thoughts lay back of the elder son's attitude?

Was there any difference between the father's treatment of the two sons in this parable?

Which had sinned against him the most deeply?

Was the elder son's upbraiding of the father true?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Disowns Brother. (933)—The villain of the story is not the prodigal, but his elder brother. He was not brother. He disowned the prodigal: "this thy son." And regarded his father as a hard taskmaster. Yet even the Pharisees, Jesus would have it understood, were in God's sight objects rather of pity than of wrath. They were still his sons, though destitute of the filial spirit; even as the outcasts whom they condemned, were still their brethren. There was room in the heart of Jesus not only for sinners but for Pharisees. He looked on both with kind and pitiful eyes, and would fain have gathered both into the Father's House.—David Smith.

Self-righteous Malice. (934)—Self-righteous malice is an evil inveterate—a sore more difficult to probe, and more hard to cure—than open disobedience and passionate sin.—Farrar.

Never Transgressed. (935)—"I never transgressed a commandment of thine." He was breaking his father's command-

ment even when he made this assertion; and the making it is a part of his hyprocrisy.—Alford.

Elder Son the Prodigal. (936)—This elder is now the lost son; he has lost all childlike, filial feeling; he betrays the hypocrite within.—Stier.

Father Loving to Both. (937)—The elder son regarded all as of merit and reward, as work and return. But the same tenderness which had welcomed the returning son, now met the elder brother. He spoke to the angry man, not in the language of merited reproof, but addressed him lovingly as "son," and reasoned with him. And then, when he had shown him his wrong, he would fain recall him to better feeling by telling him of the other as his "brother." This poor lost one—still a son and a brother—he has not got any reward, only been taken back again by a Father's love, when he had come back to him in the deep misery of his felt need. Murmuring came from thoughts of work and pay—wrong in themselves, and foreign to the proper idea of father and son; joy, from a father's heart. The elder brother's eyes were the thoughts of a servant of service and return; the younger brother's was the welcome of a son in the memory and everlasting love of a father. And this to us, and to all time.—Edersheim.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Who is the Elder Son? (938).

"Who is the elder son?" The question was once asked in an assembly of ministers at Eiberfeldt, and one made answer, "I know him very well; I met him only yesterday." "Who is he?" they asked eagerly, and he replied solemnly, "Myself." He then explained that on the previous day, hearing that a very gracious visitation of God's goodness had been received by a very ill-conditioned man, he had felt not a little envy and irritation.—Taylor.

All We are Brethren (939).

A poor boy once asked for something to eat at the house of an avaricious Christian, and received a dry, mouldy crust. The man asked the boy if he could say the Lord's Prayer, and was told "No." "Then I will teach you: "Our Father—" "Our Father," said the boy, "Is he my Father as well as Yours?" "Yes, certainly." "Then," replied the boy, "how could you think of giving your poor brother this mouldy crust of bread?"

Prodigal Son (940).

The two greatest missionary documents known to history are the Lord's Prayer and the parable of the Prodigal Son. If you have ever read the parable of the Prodigal Son as the agony of a bereaved father's heart you will find that missions are placed in the very heart of our God and Father, whose name we bear. And if you have ever said, "Our Father," you have felt the call and passion of brotherhood that runs through the whole of the missionary movement. It is there that Jesus laid the foundation of all this missionary enterprise.

Luther said: "My coat of arms shall be a heart that has the color of human flesh upon it, warm with human love, and in it shall be planted the cross, the black cross that shows the sacredness of sacrificial suffering, and that shall be set in a rose of the purest white—the purity and strength of character that God can give to those that suffer—and back of it all shall be that ground of blue that brings heaven nearer to earth, and around it shall be the golden ring of perfectedness and eternity as a symbol of what Jesus Christ has done for men."—Brown.

A Valuable Derelict (941).

A New York newspaper stated last week in black headlines that a derelict ship worth $60,000 was adrift at sea and that it would be a rich prize for somebody. He who secures it will doubtless be counted exceedingly fortunate. But the human derelicts that throng our cities are priceless. If God ever called the Christian to rescue the perishing it is today and rich will be the reward of those who save them. The marvel is that we should be so indifferent when God has promised to use us.

The Brother Spirit (942).

Turgenieff in one of his parables tells of meeting a beggar, who held out his greasy hands for alms. Turgenieff searched all his pockets, but had no money, no food, nothing whatever to give the man. He said to him, "I am sorry, brother, that I have nothing for thee." The beggar's face lightened and he said, "That is enough. Thank you." To be called "brother" was better than any alms would have been. We may not give money to the mendicant on the street, but we may show him kindness, the spirit of brotherhood, and that will be worth more to him than the largest alms. It will gladden and cheer his heart, and bring to him a little warmth of the love of Christ.

SERVICE LXXIV (22).

Parables of Jesus.

Self-Centered or God-Centered.—Luke 18: 9-14.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Prayer of Pharisee and Publican. I. Pharisee's **Prayer** (1) arrogant in attitude, I thank thee; (2) self-complacent in substance—the theme being his own excellent behavior; (3) cruel in its comparisons condemning others.

II. Prayer of the Publican (1) agonizing attitude "beat upon his breast;" God's mercy and his need its theme—sincere, earnest, oblivious to all else.

Five Conditions of Prevailing Prayer—1. Entire dependence upon the merits and meditation of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only ground of any claim for blessing. (See John 14: 13, 14; 15: 16, etc.)

2. Separation from all known sin. If we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us, for it would be sanctioning sin. (Psalm 66: 18).

3. Faith in God's Word of promise as confirmed by His oath. Not to believe him is to make him both a liar and a perjurer. (Heb. 11: 6; 6: 13-20).

4. Asking in accordance with His will. Our motives must be godly; we must not seek any gift of God to consume it upon our lusts. (1 John 4: 14; James 4: 3).

5. Importunity in supplication. There must be waiting on God and waiting for God, as the husbandman has long patience to wait for the harvest. (James 5: 7; Luke 18: 1-8.)—George Muller.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What was the Pharisee's standard of goodness?
Why was he mistaken—acts instead of motives?
Why was the Publican troubled in mind?
Why was his prayer heard?
How can a Pharisee get the spirit of a Publican?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Spiritual Pride. (943)—The parable is apparently addressed not to the Pharisees themselves, but to certain of the disciples

of Jesus who were proud of their spiritual attainments, and lacking in the virtues of humility and penitence.

The words of the Pharisee can hardly be called a prayer. He asks for nothing, and feels his need of nothing. The Pharisee did, indeed, acknowledge that his virtues were derived from God, but he took all the merit of them to himself and boasted of them before God and man.—Dummelow.

Selfish. (944)—Dividing the whole of mankind into two classes, the Pharisee's arrogance reaches even to such as this: he is one class, all the world besides in the other. And as he can think nothing too good for himself, so nothing too bad of them. He would lay claim to doing more than might strictly be demanded of him; he would bring in God as his debtor. Acknowledgment of wants or confession of sin, there is none in his prayer, if prayer it can be called, which is without these.—Trench.

Insincere. (945)—"O God, I thank thee that I am not as the rest of men." Never, perhaps were words of thanksgiving spoken in less thankfulness than these. For, thankfulness implies the acknowledgment of a gift; hence, a sense of not having had ourselves what we have received; in other words, then, a sense of our personal need, or humility. But this Pharisee's words expressed what his attitude indicated; and both were the expression, not of thankfulness, but of boastfulness, and from looking down upon others the Pharisee proceeded to look up to himself.

While the Pharisee felt no need, and uttered no petition, the Publican felt only need, and uttered only petition. The one appealed to himself for justice, the other appealed to God for mercy.—Edersheim.

Some not all Men. (946)—All that this Pharisee professed was true, and the fault of his prayer was that it breathed a spirit of self-righteousness. And therewith went a spirit of cruel contempt for others. He alone was righteous, and all his fellow-mortals were included under one sweeping condemnation. "Descend," apostrophises St. Chrysostom, "from thine insolent words. Say even that 'some men' and not 'the rest of men' are extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers. Are all extortioners except thee, O Pharisee? Are all unrighteous, and thou alone righteous?—David Smith.

Wanted Pardon. (947)—The Publican's expression of conscious unworthiness is simply the irrepressible confession of sincerity, pressed out of the soul by a longing for forgiveness—

short, because so terribly sincere. The straitened spirit in its anguish has no room for particulars.—Bishop Huntington.

God Loves Penitent, not Sin. (948)—Of course it was not the Publican's sin but his penitence that commended him to God. It is not said that he left the Temple rejoicing in the mercy which had been vouchsafed him. Perhaps he would go home with drooping head and continue sorrowing for many a day. Nevertheless in that hour when he confessed his sin and cried for mercy, he was accepted of God, and in due time he would attain to the glad assurance of salvation. Some other day he would go up to the Temple with light step and lighter heart, and declare what God had done for his soul.—David Smith.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Life's Center (949).

Every life has its center. It does not take long conversation with a man to find out what that center is. If it is wealth, he talks of money; if fame, he enthuses over its glories; if pleasure, he is always suggesting some new form of amusement. His whole thought revolves around these self-chosen selfish centers, and just as the spirit of Raphael entered into his pupils, so the spirit of the sordid things of this life will enter the life of a man or woman who might otherwise live, as Raphael did, gloriously and forever. O, that some mandate from on high might be issued that would forever brand these false centers of life! But is there not one? "Seek those things which are above." "Set your affections on things above." Seek first to be one of the learners in Christ's inner circle, for it is he alone who can teach you how to be the greatest blessing to others and get the greatest happiness for yourself.—Ida Q. Moulton.

Selfishness Impedes (950).

On one occasion Rubenstein was playing for a company of musicians, when they began to applaud. "Friends," exclaimed the great musician, "Please do not applaud! Your applause directs my thoughts from the music to myself, and I cannot play." Is the minister not thinking sometimes more about self?

The Prayer of Self (952).

A man once complained to his minister that he had prayed for a whole year that he might enjoy the comfort of religion but his prayers were never answered. The minister replied "Go home now and pray 'Father glorify Thyself.'"

SERVICE LXXV (23).

Parables of Jesus.

The Limit of Patience.—Matt. 21: 33-46.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Parable of the Husbandmen—An appeal to Conscience. I. What they had done—their wickedness in appropriating all that had been done upon the vineyard and the fruits of their own labor. Their treatment of the owner's servants—and worst of all the murder of His Son in order to get the inheritance. II. The owner's goodness—when he received no return sent again and again—overlooking their bad faith and treatment of His servants—honors them with the presence of His son. III. Their consciences immediately reply to the question, "What ought to be done with them?" "Miserably destroy those miserable men." "Take away the vineyard and give it to others." IV. Application to life—This shall God do to you.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What investment did this householder make?
What kind of tenants did he get?
What evidence of his goodness did he give?
How did the rulers condemn the husbandmen?
How did Jesus turn their condemnation upon themselves?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Deny His Lordship. (953)—This is an account, in vividly parabolic language, not only of the husbandmen's hostility, but of that of many men who are against Jesus. They wish to possess life and its good, without being forever pestered with reminders of the terms on which they hold it, and of God's desire for their love and obedience. They have a secret feeling that Christ has the right to ask for their hearts, and so they often turn from him angrily, and sometimes hate him.

Jesus is sure that God will build on him, and that his place in the building, which shall arise through the ages, will be, to even careless eyes, the crown of the manifest wonders of God's hand. Strange words from a Man who knew that in three days he would be crucified! Stranger still that they have come true! He is the foundation of the best part of the best men; the basis of thought, the motive for action, the pattern of life, the ground

of hope, for countless individuals; and on him stands firm the society of his church, and is hung all the glory of his Father's house.—Maclaren.

God's Harvest. (954)—In the history of souls and of nations, there are seasons which even more than all other times are of fruit, when God requires such with more than usual earnestness, when it will fare ill with a soul or a nation, if these be not found. —Trench.

God's Servants. (955)—And the fruits of the vineyard are the keeping of the commandments of the law, and the practice of the virtues; and the servants are the prophets, who, when sent to demand from Israel obedience to the law and a virtuous life, were variously maltreated.—Euthymius.

The Fallen and Crushed. (956)—They fall on the stone who are offended at Christ in his low estimate. They on whom the stone falls are those who set themselves in self-conscious opposition against the Lord; who, knowing what he is, do yet to the end oppose themselves to him and to his kingdom. These shall not merely fall and be broken, for one might recover himself, though with some present harm, from such a fall as this; but on them the stone shall fall as from heaven, and shall grind them to powder.—Trench.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Caring for the Vineyard (957).

The story is told of a man of large wealth who lived most of the year in a country home among the hills of Vermont. All his inheritance and surroundings were those of culture and luxury. All the temptations of wealth drew him toward ease and selfishness. But instead of that he was known in the little church of the place and throughout the neighborhood as a self-sacrificing, hard-working, consecrated Christian. One day a minister who visited the church asked him how he came to throw himself so heartily into Christian work. His answer was quaint but striking: "When I became a Christian, and began to read my Bible with appreciation of its meaning, I read that I was called into the vineyard of the Lord; and I made up my mind at once that I was not called there to eat grapes, but to hoe, and I've been trying to hoe ever since!"

The man with the hoe is needed in every church. Those Christians who come into the Lord's vineyard and have no idea of doing anything, are usually in the majority. "I've

joined the church," said such a man to his pastor, "and I feel that I am saved. But you'll have to excuse me from coming to prayer-meetings, or taking up Sunday-school work. I'm too busy." All he wanted was the grapes, he let other members do the hoeing. How much blessing and strength does a Christian like that get? How much are we getting—and is the reason of our lack entirely unconnected with a lack of hoeing?

Modern Vineyards (958).

The body is a vineyard that is entrusted to our care, to be well treated as an instrument for doing God's work. A good workman always takes good care of his tools. "The human body is one of the most glorious things in the world." "Years ago, Dr. Todd, of Pittsfield, Mass., wrote a book called 'The House I Live In,' and in it he fascinated the young reader by his description of the human body.—Schauffler.

The mind is still more wonderful, and should be educated, trained, kept pure and bright, that it may bring forth fruit for the master.

The soul, the very self—the citadel, the dwelling-place of the moral nature, the fountain of character—is a vineyard that should be kept with all diligence, "for out of it are the issues of life."

The church is a vineyard for us to cultivate for Christ.

The Nation is a vineyard intrusted to our care. Patriotism is a religious duty.—Suggestive Illustrations.

Choosing His Own Punishment (959).

Albert was the child who had to be taught orderliness. He could not remember to hang up his hat and coat. There was a family conference. The remedy decided on was Albert's own suggestion. Twenty times he went up and down stairs, each time removing the hat and coat from the hall and taking it back to hang up again. But a week later, once more Albert's coat was found dropped on the sitting-room sofa. He was summoned from the ball game where he was pitcher. It was a great annoyance to the rest that he must leave. But he spent the remainder of the afternoon going up and down stairs hanging the coat on its nail one hundred times. He never again forgot. A boy who should repeatedly have to be called from ball games to hang up coats, you see, would cease to be popular as pitcher and would come to be regarded in the light of a public nuisance.

SERVICE LXXVI (24).

Parables of Jesus.
Be Ye Ready.—Matt. 25: 1-13.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Sudden Cry. I. Comes upon a silent world—all shall hear. II. Comes at an unexpected moment. III. Finds all asleep. IV. Arouses all from sleep. V. Stirs all to activity. VI. Fills some with joy, others with perplexity.—Biblical Encyclopedia.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Who provided the oil for the lamps?
What is the significance of the midnight cry?
Why could not the wise give oil to the foolish virgins?
Why was the door shut at the marriage feast?
Why didn't the Lord know the foolish virgins?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Asleep to God. (961)—It being night, all alike grow drowsy and fall asleep. Had it been wrong to sleep, the wise virgins would certainly have been represented as keeping awake. The sleep is such occupation with the concerns of the present life as is natural and necessary. The sleep of the parable represents the business of the life that now is, in which Christians, however anxious to be ready for the coming of the Lord, must engage and not only so, but must give themselves to it with an engrossment which for the time may amount to as entire abstraction from distinctly spiritual duties as sleep is an abstraction from the duties of the day. Our Lord does not expect us to be always equally wide awake to spiritual and eternal things. The wise as well as the foolish slumber and sleep.—Gibson.

Need all Our Oil. (962)—Whatever the oil may signify, the fact remains that on that great day each will have need of all the grace that he has, and "none will be able by any means to redeem his brother."

We may be asleep when the Lord comes, yet, if our hearts be true to him and leap up in gladness to bid him welcome, all will be well with us, we are ready and we shall go in with him to the feast.—David Smith.

Our Virtues Cannot Save Others. (963)—For each individual soul will receive the reward for his own deeds, nor in the day of judgment can the virtues of one make amends for the vices of another.—Jerome.

The Market Closed. (964)—The answer of the wise is not selfishness. It is not from our fellows, however bright their lamps, that we can ever get that inward grace. None of them has more than suffices for his own needs, nor can any give it to another. It may be bought, on the same terms as the pearl of great price was bought, "without money;" but the market is closed, as on a holiday, on the day of the king's son's marriage. The foolish virgins had no time to get the oil before he came, and they had not got it when they returned. The lesson is plain. We can only get the new life of the Spirit, which will make our lives a light, from God; and we can get it now, not then.

Our parable is addressed to Christians, and that it is to them that its message is chiefly brought. It is they whom it warns not to put off making sure that they have provision for the continuance of the Christ-life. We have, day by day to go to Him that sells and "buy for ourselves." And we know that the price of the oil is the surrender of ourselves and the opening of our hearts to the entrance of that divine Spirit.—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Risk of Delay (965).

Rev. Dan Baker tells of a man who was crossing the ocean. He was leaning over the rail of the vessel tossing something in the air. At last an onlooker asked "What is it that you are tossing up so carelessly?" He replied, "A diamond of great value, it is all I have in the world." "Then is it not an awful risk to toss it up so carelessly?"

"No risk at all, I've been doing it for the last half hour," said the man. "There might come a last time," remarked the onlooker. The man laughed and tossed it up again. There was a little splash in the ocean and he stands aghast and then cries, "Lost! lost! lost!" You say the story is not true, it is true—the ocean is eternity, you are on the vessel of life; that diamond is your soul and you have been trifling with it.

Suddeness of Death (966).

During the bombardment of Charleston, while the wedding ceremony of the Governor's daughter was being performed, a

shell struck the house and the bride was mortally wounded. Reclining on the couch, she took the hand of her affianced and soon after the marriage vows were spoken, expired. "In such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh."

"Prepare to Meet Thy God" (967).

As one of the wealthiest men New York City ever produced lay dying, he said, "Bring me the gardener." When he came the rich man said, "Pray for me." When the prayer was finished, the rich man said, "Sing."

"Come ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore."

The time is coming when every man will face death, face God, face eternity, he will then see as God sees.

Redeeming the Time (968).

A man was wrecked and borne by the tide to an unknown island where the natives made him their king. He learned they had done this often before and inquired what become of the other kings. An old man told him, "We will keep you as king for a year, and then we will set you adrift again as we did all other strangers who have been our kings."

Then the king said, "Are ships and soldiers and servants at my command? Have I power to use money while I am king?" "Yes, you can use all these things."

The king heard of another island so he transported all his possessions to the new home and was made ruler of a new kingdom permanently.

An End of Things (969).

There comes an end to all these things which you are doing now! Not because God snatches them out of your hand, but because they exhaust themselves and expire, because they are by their nature temporary and perishing, they die. You follow out any of them a little way, and you come to this inevitable epitaph in their mortality. "Then cometh the end." How is it then with you? Have you anything to which there comes no end?" "What?" you say: "What sort of thing?" And I reply, "Any passion for character and love of God!" Those are eternal. There comes no end to those. You may change your dress, your name, your habits, your companionships, your work,—everything that you do,—but your passion for character and love of God, if you have them, you never change, they are the same forever.

SERVICE LXXVII (25).

Parables of Jesus.
How to be Ready.—Matt. 25: 14-30.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Reckoning. I. At a fixed time—not universally hastened or deferred. II. After a just method—content with each who had done his best. III. Wisely distributing reward and punishment—praises and reproofs. IV. The faithful were prepared —received approval.—Biblical Encyclopedia.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What is the value of stewardship?
When was the reckoning to be?
What was the gauge of the Lord's commendation?
Why was the man of one talent condemned?
Why was it given to the man who had ten?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Till He Comes. (970)—"Do business till I come" is the Lord's behest in view of the uncertainty of his second advent. How needful it was appears from what befell at Thessalonica ere many years had elapsed. The idea that the Day of the Lord was at hand took possession of the believers there and wrought grievous mischief. The excitement was intense; the church was in confusion; the business of life was at a standstill. So serious was the situation that St. Paul wrote to them and sought to recall them to sobriety. "The Last Day," says St. Augustine, "is hidden that all days may be observed."

The Lord will reward his servants not so much according to their achievement as according to their zeal and faithfulness. Since the first slave and the second displayed equal diligence, each doubling his deposit, they got the self-same commendation and the self-same reward. And, had the third done business with his single talent and made it two, he would have had a like recompense; yea, had he earned three talents, tripling his trust, he would have been greeted with the loftiest eulogy of all. His condemnation was not that he earned less than his fellows, but that he earned nothing. And, finally, the parable teaches that the reward which the Lord will bestow upon his faithful

servants is not discharge from labor but a call to further and larger service.—David Smith.

Partnership with Him. (971)—The capacity for work lies not within our own power; but it is in our power to use for Christ whatever we may have.

The second part of the reward—that of entering into the joy of his Lord, implies satisfied heart-sympathy with the aims and gains of his Master, and participation in them.

The falseness of the excuse, that he was afraid to do anything with it—an excuse too often repeated in our days—lest, peradventure, he might do more harm than good, was now fully exposed by the Master. It proceeded from a want of knowledge of Him, as if he were a hard, exacting Master, not one who reckons even the least service as done to himself; from misunderstanding also of what work for Christ is, in which nothing can ever fail or be lost; and lastly, from want of joyous sympathy with it.—Edersheim.

Co-operation. (972)—"Put my money to the bankers." These timid natures who are not adapted for independent labor on behalf of the kingdom of God, are now advised at least to associate themselves with persons of greater strength, under whose guidance they may apply their gifts to the service of the church.—Olshausen.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

No Preparation (973).

"Oh, God, they have deceived me, then; and this is death;" was the startling exclamation of a sinful English king, and with those words he sank back and died. And very commonly for hours, and even days, before death men and women lie quite unconscious; the pulse still beats, the breath still labors, possibly the tongue still murmurs, as the imagination floats amid the confused reminiscences of the past, and babbles of green fields far away. But no voice of exhortation can reach them there; they can gather no thought into consecutive meaning; they can breathe no prayer to him into whose awful presence they are about to enter.—Farrar's Sermons.

Death Not Feared (974).

Lord Salisbury never recovered from the loss he suffered by the death of his wife. Like most Englishmen, he was reticent about the feelings of his heart. But, at a church meeting, held to pay honor to a local philanthropist who had died, he spoke

of the sorrow which had come into his own life. "When a man has done his work and those whom he loves pass one by one behind the veil," said he, "there is nothing better for him than to die as our friend has died, full of years and leaving behind him a memory fragrant with good deeds. He should be able to say these words:

"When my last hour grows dark for me
I shall not fear
Death's dreaded voice to hear.
I shall not fear the night
When day is done;
My life was loyal to the light
And served the sun."

Faithful Unto Death (975).

It was an intensely cold night, Gen. Alger was making his rounds, a few hours before daylight when he approached a post where a solitary picket stood on guard. As he neared the post he was greatly surprised that the soldier did not halt him and demand the countersign. He could plainly see him leaning against a tree and was indignant to find one of his men sleeping, as he supposed, on duty. Walking up to the man to place him under arrest, he was horrified to find him frozen to death in the faithful performance of duty.

Ready (976).

A pastor gave this testimony at a Young People's meeting: "When I was a lad I was employed one time as an office boy by an old physician who gave me this advice in regard to the tasks I was to perform: 'Do it well, my boy, for we never know when we turn the key in the door in the evening but what the work is done.'

"And the old man lived with this thought in view and when one evening he turned the key in the door and the Lord told him that night the work was done, he was ready to go."

Be Ready to Go (977).

A mother was explaining to her little girl the death of her father. The mother said: "God has sent for your father, and will send for us but we do not know just when," Finally the little girl said, "If we do not know when, don't you think we had better pack up and get ready to go? God might send when we are not ready."

SERVICE LXXVIII (26).

Parables of Jesus.
The Test of Life.—Matt. 25: 32-46.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Service to men the test of love. I. Christ is Judge and Lord of all. II. There is to be a day of Judgment for our works. III. Christ and his people are one, "Ye did," "Ye did it not to me." IV. Our service to men is the test of our love for Christ. V. The smallest service is true service when love of Christ is in it. VI. The conditions of our eternal life depend upon our service here.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

How did Jesus describe the day of Judgment?
How does the King address the righteous?
What does he say to those on the left hand?
What determined their destiny?
How could they profess such ignorance?
What was their final judgment?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Christ in the Least. (978)—The test is character evinced by deed of kindness, but Jesus attaches thereto a profound and wonderful significance. And their felicity they have earned by kindness to himself. It is an amazing announcement. Never till this hour have they seen him, and how have they done him all these kindnesses? The King explains. With the poor and the wretched the Son of the Father always claimed kinship; and, pointing to them, he replies: "Verily I tell you, inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these, my brethren, even the least, unto me ye did it." Then, turning to those on his left and charging them with neglect of all those deeds of charity, he calls them "accursed" and bids them depart from him. They have steeled their hearts against the miseries of their fellow-mortals, and in neglecting them they have neglected him.

It is a wonderful claim that Jesus here advances, that he is everywhere present, even where he is unknown, observing whatever befalls; and so tender is his sympathy, that it is as though he were incarnate, in every sufferer, presenting himself to the world and claiming its succor and service.—David Smith.

Automatic Judgment. (979)—The final judgment is the effect of men's actions; it is the result of their compelled disclosing of the deepest motives of their lives, it is the act of the perfect discernment of the Judge. Their deeds will judge them! they will judge themselves; Christ will judge.

Note the surprises of the judgment. The astonishment of the righteous is not modesty disclaiming praise, but real wonder at the undreamed-of significance of their deeds.

There is an element of mystery hidden from ourselves in all our deeds. So heaven will be full of blessed surprises, as we reap the fruit growing "in power" of what we sowed "in weakness" and as doleful will be the astonishment of those who see in the lurid light of that day, the true character of their lives, as one long neglect of plain duties, which was all a defrauding the Saviour of his due. Mere nothing is enough to condemn, and its victims will be shudderingly amazed at the fatal wound it has inflicted on them.—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Least of These (980).

A worker in a Manchester slum tells the story of a whole family completely changed by the power of a deformed child. The father was a navvy, the lads were coarse and uncouth, and the mother, overworked and far from strong, had fallen into untidy habits. But there was born into that home a crippled child, and that deformed baby was the means of drawing out the sympathy and love and tenderness of the whole family. The man nursed and petted the child of an evening, the boys made playthings for her, and showed their affection in all sorts of pleasant ways; the mother kept the window clean, that her child, pillowed on the table, might look out on the court. The visitor declared that she witnessed a complete transformation in the family—an elevating and refining process went right through the whole household.

The Greatest Gift (981).

One of the greatest names of the time of the civil war was that of Governor Andrews, the famous "war governor" of Massachusetts. A few years after his death, his pastor, James Freeman Clarke, wrote a sketch of his life in which, in five words, he revealed one of the chief secrets of his power—"He was a wide liker." Not only did his love reach out to all those whom

his life naturally touched—he was constantly seeking the dishonored and the friendless, constantly making time, in his crowded and anxious days, to lighten the troubles of others. Upon the day of his funeral, the entire city was in mourning and vast crowds lined the streets all the way, among them being some poor colored women, who ran beside the coffin the whole five miles from Boston to Mt. Auburn. His greatness they could not understand, but they knew the heart of the man whose motto had been "Aux plus désherités le plus d'amour."

There are people, young people especially perhaps, who feel that life's gifts and opportunities are most unfairly divided. They would like to be brilliant or intellectual or talented, and they cannot—they have not the power in themselves. But the greatest gift of all, that which the world most needs, the gift of the loving heart, is possible to anyone who honestly desires it. It is more than possible, it is God's command to his children. "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you." Surely here is an ideal large enough to fill to the brim the most ambitious heart.

To Quiet Conscience (983).

Two ladies passing down the street noticed the box marked by the Salvation Army for a free Christmas dinner for the poor. One of the ladies paused and dropped a generous donation into it. "Oh, I remember! You promised them something the other day," laughed her friend. "Now your conscience is clear." The giver looked up wonderingly. "I wasn't thinking about my conscience, but about those hungry children," she answered simply. There is a great deal of our so-called benevolence which really has as its chief motive the wish to save ourselves from discomfort, rather than any great desire to add to the comfort of others; it is not so much food to the needy, as a quieting powder to our own conscience.

SERVICE LXXIX (27).

His Great Address.

Steps in the Way. Matt. 5: 3-12.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Way of Blessedness. I. Happiness depends upon what happens to one from without. Blessedness is a state of perfect poise within that can meet all happenings undisturbed. II. Characteristics of the blessed state: (1) realizes its own condition—qualifications necessary to possess it—poor in spirit—mourns—is meek; (2) deep desire and craving—unmixed motive in longing for God and righteousness; (3) merciful and peacemaking—in harmony with God, they are like him; (4) tribulation a cause for rejoicing.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What is being poor in spirit?

What kind of "mourning" is this?

Why are we prejudiced against meekness?

How do men hunger after righteousness?

What is the difference between generosity and mercy?

Why should "seeing God" be the reward of purity?

Who are the peacemakers?

What two qualifications of persecution are necessary to gain the blessedness?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Blessed. (984)—"Blessed are ye" was his opening sentence, and it would seem most natural to the twelve with their Jewish dream of an earthly kingdom. Extreme would their astonishment be when they heard him further. He pronounced them "blessed," and not because they would have places by his throne in Jerusalem, but because they would be poor, lowly, sorrowful, despised and persecuted. Every sentence of his benediction was in Jewish ears an astounding paradox.—David Smith.

God's View. (985)—Each one of the beatitudes is a saying which contradicts man's opinion, and is a distinct cross to flesh and blood. Blessed are, not the rich, but the poor; not the joyful, but the sorrowful; not the self-satisfied, the triumphant, the magnificent, but the meek, the merciful, the peacemaker, the

pure. Blessed are they that actually suffer; the despised, the ill-used, the reviled, and the outcast.—Vaughn.

Results, not Rewards. (986)—The foundation of all is laid in poverty of spirit. The word rendered "poor" does not only signify one in a condition of want, but one who is aware of the condition, and seeks relief. If we may refer to Latin words here, it is mendicus rather than pauper, a beggar rather than a poor man. So that to be poor in spirit is to be conscious of need, of dependence on God. The promises attached to the Beatitudes are in each case the results which flow from the quality, rather than the rewards arbitrarily given for it.—Maclaren.

Meekness Scarce. (987)—The prominence given to meekness in Christ's teaching is one of the peculiarities of Christian morals, and is a standing condemnation of much so-called Christianity. Pride and anger and self-assertion and retaliation flaunt in fine names, and are called many virtues. Meekness is smiled at, or trampled on, and the men who exercise it are called "Quakers" and "poor-spirited" and "chicken-hearted" and the like. Social life among us is in flagrant contradiction of this beatitude; and as for national life, all "Christian nations" agree that to apply Christ's precept to it would be absurd and suicidal. He said that the meek should inherit the earth; statesmen say that the only way to keep a country is to be armed to the teeth, and let no man insult its flag with impunity. Many a man will indulge in confessions of sin, and crackle up in sputtering heat of indignation at some slight or offence. If he does, his lowly words have had little meaning, and the benediction of these promises will come scantily to his heart.—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Pain the Source of Blessedness (988).

Pearls are said to grow in the pearl oyster from some blow upon the shell or from a grain of sand within. "The cutting and irritating grain of sand which, by accident or incaution, has got within the shell, incites the living inmate to secrete, from its own resources, the means of coating the intrusive substance. And is it not, or may it not be, even so with the irregularities and unevenness of health and fortune in our own case? We may turn diseases into pearls. The means and materials are within ourselves and the process is easily understood.—Coleridge.

What Is Purity? (989)

A thing is pure when there is nothing in it out of harmony with its nature. Water is pure, air is pure, when they contain only their constituent elements, and in the right proportion. Gold is pure when it has been separated by fire from all foreign matter. The diamond is pure, the crystal is pure, when there is nothing in them which hinders the refraction and reflection of light. It is thus with the heart, which is the emotional part of the soul. It is pure, when it loves only that which it ought to love.—The Abbé Bautain.

To the Pure all Things are Pure (990).

The pure are like white swans swimming down the sewer to whom no speck of defilement clings. Or like the lotus leaves which I have seen in muddy water, but always when put under it, coming up perfectly clean, and shining brighter under the muddy surface than in the open sunlight.

The Lot of the Chinese Convert (991).

The break of the genuine convert with his past in China is far more abrupt than anything with which we are familiar. He turns his back on opium, gambling and unchastity, the besetting sins of his fellows. He abandons cheating, lying, back-biting, quarreling and filthy language, which are all too rife among the undisciplined common people. He shuns litigation, often the ruin of the villager. By withdrawing from the festivals in the ancestral hall and from the rites at the graves of his ancestors, he sunders himself from his clan and incurs persecution. Thus the converts become separatists, with the merits and defects of separatists. Cut off from the world and thrown on one another, they form a group apart, a body of Puritans that will one day be a precious nucleus of moral regeneration for China.

Blessed Are the Meek (992).

Meekness has, and must have for one of its accompaniments, a temper which is not easily provoked; a serenity which is not easily disturbed; an indisposition to retaliate injuries. These signs of meekness—which may also be symptoms of weakness—have been mistaken for the quality itself, as the hands of a clock have been mistaken for its mainspring; or iron pyrites has been mistaken for gold, because it has the yellow glitter of gold. Meekness lives in the serene heights of an angel dealing with a passionate child. "Once when Francis Parkman was alone

among the Sioux Indians they grew insulting. He knew they meant to murder and rob him. But he was not angry; he was not alarmed. He had a few rockets at hand. He knew that the moment he fired one of them the savages would take him for a deity. In that consciousness he was calm."—W. Burnet Wright.

Gospel Hunger on the Kongo (994).

Al-lrubo, Ibanj and the surrounding district contains over 8,000 baptized members of our Church. More than 900 were baptized and received into the church at Luebo during the past twelve months.

It would take one missionary's whole time to handle the delegations who are coming in from the villages on the plains, and far out in the jungles, urging that teachers be sent speedily to tell the people that are in the darkness of the Saviour's love and the Way of Life. One day as we waited at Luebo some men came who had walked about 175 miles. They told the missionaries that they had come from a dark village far away; that all their people were in darkness. They had heard that if they would build a church in their village that a teacher would come to teach them the way of salvation. They built a church, and they had waited and waited. The church had rotted down; no teacher had come.—Rev. J. O. Reavis, in Christian Observer.

Thirst for Truth (995).

In the early days before there were many bibles in Wales, Mary Jones, the daughter of a poor weaver, attended Sabbath School and learned to repeat large portions of the Word of God readily. The nearest bible was two miles from her home and she determined to have one of her own. After years of saving she had enough to buy a Welsh bible; then she learned that the nearest town where one could be bought was twenty-five miles away. Nothing daunted she set off barefoot, carrying her shoes that she might wear them in the town.

She called on the minister only to find that all bibles had been sold months before excepting two he had promised to keep for friends. Then she wept bitterly. He was touched by her tears and finally gave her one of the bibles he had promised some one else. He told her story before a Tract Society and it led not only to the forming of a Welsh Bible Society, but to the establishment of the British Foreign Bible Society. The thirst of a young girl sixteen years of age for the Word of God has led to the satisfying of hungry and thirsty souls ever since.

SERVICE LXXX (28).

His Great Address.

Human Relations—Anger.—Matt. 5: 21-26.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Christ's View of Anger. Anger is like fire. I. In its effect on us—consumes judgment and discretion—eats away self-control—blinds and leads into unreasonable action—destroys happiness—brings the life into condemnation. II. In its effect on others—enkindles angry retort—lights fires of hate and resentment—destroys affection and friendship—separates homes and kindred. III. It exacts immediate tribute—utmost farthing—immediately destructive in its action—cannot easily be restored if ever. IV. No gift or act of worship is acceptable to God while there is anger, or resentment the effects of anger in the heart. "Therefore agree quickly then come to the altar."

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What degrees of anger does Jesus give?

Which one does he say merits the penalty of the olden time?

Are there less or more guilty than this first?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Mercy. (996)—And then follows a comparison of the new law of mercy with the old law of threatening; the old was transitory, this permanent; the old was a type and shadow, the new a fulfillment and completion; the old demanded obedience in outward action, the new was to permeate the thoughts; the old contained the rule of conduct, the new the secret of obedience. The command "Thou shalt not murder," was henceforth extended to angry words and feelings of hatred.—Farrar.

Thought Murder. (997)—The main points to be observed are, the distinct extension of the conception of "killing" to embrace malevolent anger, whether it find vent or is kept close in the heart; the clear recognition that, whilst the emotion which is the source of the act is of the same nature as the act, and that therefore he who "hateth his brother is a murderer," there are degrees of criminality, according as the anger remains unexpressed, or finds utterance in more or less bitter and contemptuous language; that consequently there are degrees in the

severity of the punishment which is administered by no earthly tribunal; and that, this stern sentence has hidden in it the possibility of forgiveness.—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Did This Ever Happen at Your House? (998)

Josh Billings recommended a parent who wished his children to observe certain proprieties to "Hike along that way yourself."

Did you ever scold one of the children for being cross, and catch a glance from your husband which signified, "You're cross yourself?"

Did you ever reprove a child for putting his elbows on the table, and find your own elbows there?

Did you ever teach a child to be honest, and let him keep the car fare which the conductor failed to take up?

Did your husband ever scold your boy for smoking, and puff away while he scolded?

Have you ever forbidden swear words, and coarse slang, and used slang in forbidding it?

Have you rebuked the children for gossip, and gossiped before them?—Wallace's Farmer.

The Little Loaf (999).

Many years ago there was a great famine in Germany, and the poor people suffered from hunger. A rich man who loved children sent for twenty of them, and said to them: "In this basket there is a loaf of bread for each of you. Take it, and come back every day till the famine is over; I will give you a loaf each day."

The children were very hungry. They seized the basket, and struggled to get at the largest loaf. They even forgot to thank the man who had been kind to them. After a few minutes of quarreling and snatching for bread, every one ran away with his loaf except one little girl, named Gretchen. She stood there alone at a little distance from the gentleman. Then, smiling, she took up the last loaf, the smallest of all, and thanked him.

Next day the children came again, and they behaved as badly as ever. Gretchen, who would not push with the rest, received only a tiny loaf scarcely half the size of the others. But when she came home, and her mother began to cut the loaf, out dropped six shining coins of silver.

"Oh, Gretchen!" exclaimed her mother, "this must be a

mistake. The money does not belong to us. Run as quick as you can, and take it back to the gentleman."

So Gretchen carried it back; but when she gave the gentleman her mother's message, he said: "No, no, it was not a mistake. I had the silver baked into the smallest loaf in order to reward you. Remember that the person who is content to have a small loaf rather than quarrel for a larger one will find blessings which are better than money baked in bread."

A Soft Answer (1000).

"What's wrong?" said the paper hanger, snappily, at his end of the telephone. All day he had heard nothing but complaints, and one man of his force was home with a sick mother, and the rest were driven so with the work that the paperhanger fairly scowled into the receiver.

Then the clerk saw his face change. Over his worn countenance there flashed a look of rest and satisfaction. "Thank you, ma'am," was his answer. "It's very kind of you, we're much obliged. We're very glad."

"Big order?" asked the clerk as the paperhanger turned to him.

"Better than that," said the proprietor. "I can get orders any day, but I never got the like of this before. Why, it's that Mrs. Brown whom we had so much hard work to suit over the shade of green for that sitting room, and she just called up to say that she's delighted with it, and that everybody admires our work. 'Nothing wrong,' says she, 'all very nice, indeed, and much obliged for the great pains you took, and thought you'd like to know we're enjoying it so much.' Well, she is a lady, and no mistake."

The Dust That Blinds (1001).

"Among the herd of cattle in our home pasture when I was a boy," said the farmer reminiscently, "was one old fellow who was something of a terror. 'Old Tempest,' as we called him, was peaceable enough a good part of the time, but his temper was very uncertain. He would browse about the lot, serene and contented apparently, for hours, and then suddenly be discovered bellowing, plunging, and intent on mischief. It excited my curiosity, and I often watched him work himself up into one of his passions. He would tire of standing, perhaps, a fly would sting him, or some trifle of the sort befall; and he would begin to paw the ground a little. The

pawing raised a slight dust, and the dust offended him. He pawed more angrily, and raised a greater dust which flew into his eyes and throat irritating him yet more. He seemed to consider it a deadly affront offered by something or somebody, and so worked himself into a fury over it. In a few minutes he would be kicking and bellowing in a perfect whirl of dust, ready to tear the earth in pieces.

Gentlemen and Christian (1003).

D. L. Moody once got up in the pulpit and couldn't preach; the Holy Spirit had left him. But he knew what was wrong so he got down out of the pulpit, went to one of the members of his congregation and asked forgiveness. Then he went back and could preach. In speaking of this he said: "If a Christian doesn't know enough to be a gentleman when he finds it out he ought to be Christian enough to ask pardon for the wrong."

The Spoken Word (1004).

Most of us are familiar with Will Carleton's poem, "The First Settler's Story," and its tragic ending:

"Boys flying kites haul in their white winged birds,
You can't do that when you're flying words.
'Careful with fire' is good advice, we know,
Careful with words is ten times doubly so.
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead,
But God himself can't kill them when they're said."

A Chance to Cool Off (1005).

Hanging on the wall in the office of George W. Martin, general agent of the Rock Island-Frisco lines, is a card on which is printed:

"Write Your Letter While Angry If You Must. But Don't Mail It Until the Next Day."

"I remember a young fellow who one time wrote a mean letter to his father. He and I worked in the same office. He read me the letter and I advised him not to send it. He was angry, though, and refused to take the advice. He sealed it and asked me to mail it for him. I simply dropped it in my pocket and let it stay there till the next day. The following morning he came in the office looking worried.

" 'George,' he said, 'I wish I had never written that letter to the old gentleman. It will break his heart.' "

"I pitched it out to him. 'There it is,' I said. 'I didn't mail it because I knew you would be sorry about it.' "

SERVICE LXXXI (29).

His Great Address.

Human Relations—Purity.—Matt. 5:27-32.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Jesus and Laws of Social Purity. I. Impure thoughts are sin's seed that develop into sin's deed. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." II. For the preservation of life itself it is vital that sources and instruments of impurity be absolutely cut off—"eye"—"hand." Many a soul has been lured the way of death by glance of eye or pressure of hand. Temptation comes through sight and sensibility. III. Impurity is not only a sin against self—against society—it is sin against God—Joseph shrank from it because of this—David exclaims, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned." IV. The Marriage Vow is sacred. Jesus' teaching very plain. Divorce only justifiable for infidelity.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Where is guilt located?

How energetic must one be in avoiding causes of guilt?

What bearing has this passage on our laws?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Jesus on Marriage. (1006)—Jesus knows that the happiness of mankind, as well as the moral position of women, depend essentially upon the married state. He makes the sanctity of marriage a fundamental law of Christian religion and society; he pursues adultery even into the recesses of the human heart, the human thought; he forbids divorce. Signal and striking testimony to the progressive action of God upon the human race! Jesus Christ restores to the divine law of marriage the purity and authority that Moses had not enjoined to the Hebrews, "because of the hardness of their hearts."

Pharisees Divorcees. (1007)—The Pharisaic doctrine of marriage offences restricted adultery to the crime itself, and it sanctioned divorce at the mere whim of the husband. As with homicide, so, in adultery, the morality of the New Kingdom traced the crime home to the heart, and condemned the unclean glance as a virtual commission of the crime itself. The thoughts were nothing, in the loose morality of the day, but Jesus arraigns the secret lusts of the breast, with an earnestness unknown to

the Rabbis. Unconditional self-mortification is to be carried out, when guilty thoughts imperil the soul. "If your right eye," says He, "or your right hand, your sight or your touch, lead you into temptation, it is better for you to pluck out the one, and cut off the other, rather than be led astray, and not only lose a share in my kingdom, but be cast into hell hereafter." Not that He meant this in a hard and literal sense. The sin is in the heart, but the senses are its instruments, and no guard can be too strict, no self-restraint too great, if they endanger spiritual purity.—Geikie.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Pure in Thought (1008).

Senator Hoar, in his Autobiography, describes a sermon preached by Rev. Dr. James Walker, President of Harvard University, on "Leading into captivity every thought," which made a deep impression on the students. "He described with a terrific effect the thinking over in imagination scenes of vice by the youth who seemed to the world outside to fall suddenly from virtue. He said there was no such thing as a sudden fall from virtue. The scene had been enacted in thought, and the man had become rotten before the time of the outward act. 'If we could look into his heart we should find him at his accursed rehearsals again.'"

Evil Within (1010).

All the forces of evil may come upon a soul from without, and fail to shake it. But the smallest evil within, that is loved and desired and continued in, will accomplish what the outside attack has failed in. The only hopeless evil is the evil that we do not hate, nor endeavor to escape from, but allow to remain.

We can, if we choose, avoid evil companions; but we have to live with ourselves every day. It is our business, then, to make ourselves the best we can, to elevate our minds, to cast out evil thoughts, to build up our souls. Then we are safe company for ourselves.

Too Much Rope (1011).

A boy and a dog met. This boy had a long piece of rope tied around this dog's neck to serve the purpose of a collar and chain. At first, the boy was leading the dog in a quiet manner. But the dog grew restless, and began to tug and pull at the rope. The boy gave the dog all the rope he had, and then things changed. Instead of the boy leading the dog, the dog began to lead, the

boy following that dog as he darted around the corner of a building. The dog had the boy on the run. I laughed at the boy's predicament.

There are other companionships than those formed by boys and dogs. We form companionships between our habits and ourselves. We think we are the leaders in the party—and we may be. But there are times when our habits refuse to be satisfied with the liberty we allow them, and they become restless. They do not work as strenuously as did the dog, but they pull for more rope just the same.—Baptist Union.

Exclusions (1012).

If I would talk with God, my hasty tongue
Must hold itself for that high converse pure,
As one who has appointment with a king
Scorns gossip with a minion at the gate.
If I would listen to the voice of God,
I dare not hear the prattlement of men,
The bargaining, the vaunting, the untruth,
The words that crawl and sting; for ears have room
For somewhat, and no more. If I would walk
Beside my God, his comrade and his friend,
I must go his way, he will not go mine.
If I would own the wealth of God, the gold,
The gems of affluent heaven, like the dross
Of basest refuse I must hurl away
The spoil of greed and all the miser's glut.
If I would know the wondrous lore of God,
What sciences I shall not dare to know!
If I would wield the awful power of God,
How I must sink myself in helplessness!
If I would revel in the love of God,
What lesser loves must I disdain to serve!
O Infinite, O Lover, O Supreme,
Father and Leader and unfailing Friend,
What littles must I gladly lose for thee,
What nothings must I tread beneath my feet
To reach thy hand, thy bosom, and thy face!

—Amos R. Wells in The Christian Endeavor World.

SERVICE LXXXII (30).

His Great Address.

Human Relations—Revenge.—Matt. 5: 38-42.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Laws of Retribution. I. Christ's followers will meet bitter treatment from evil. He has not left us in the dark as to how to meet it. II. Justice fulfilling the law demands "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," but man demanding justice for himself usurps God's place. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," saith the Lord. III. Love fulfilling the law is willing to suffer because of the sins of others. IV. Good for evil is the law of Christ-love and Christ-life.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

How literally are these statements to be interpreted?

Are these precepts for the weak or the strong?

Does a strong man have any responsibility concerning the oppression of the weak?

What are we to give to beggars?

Must we give that which they ask?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Persecution. (1013)—Jesus had warned the Apostles that they must expect persecution, and he proceeded to instruct them how they could comport themselves therein, adducing, after the picturesque manner which he loved, several examples of the sort of treatment which they would encounter. Smiting on the face was a common form of insult in the East. The injury was insignificant, but the indignity was extreme. Even a slave, says Seneca, would prefer scourging to a buffet. Such contumely the Twelve would encounter in the prosecution of their mission.

It is not craven submission that Jesus counsels here, but, on the contrary, that noble dignity which meets insult and outrage with proud disdain.—David Smith.

Non-resistance. (1014)—The old law was suited for the stage of civilization in which it was given, and probably was then a restriction, rather than a sanction, of the wild law of retaliation. Jesus sweeps it away entirely, and goes much further than even its abrogation. For he forbids not only retaliation but even resistance. The disciple is to meet evil with a

manifestation, not of anger, hatred, or intent to inflict retribution, but of readiness to submit to more. The chief stress is to be laid, not on the outward action, but on the disposition, and on the action mainly as the outcome and exhibition of that.—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

He Believed as He Said (1016).

A Missionary in Africa read the verse, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away," to his native audience. The chief of the tribe sent to inquire if he meant what he read. Was that what the new religion meant? When he replied "Yes," first one and then another came until he was stripped of his belongings, even his clothing and could not venture forth. Then the heart of the old chief relented. "He believes what he say," and he gave orders that all should be returned, and came to the missionary's hut to learn more of this new, strange religion.

Pardon For His Enemy (1017).

During the Revolutionary War there lived in Pennsylvania a man who had secured an unenviable notoriety by his abuse of the pastor and members of a Baptist Church. He was also guilty of treason and had been sentenced to death. No sooner did the pastor hear this than he set out on foot to intercede for the man's life. He was told that his prayer for his friend's life could not be granted. "My friend!" exclaimed Pastor Miller. "I haven't a worse enemy living than that man." "What!" rejoined Gen. Washington. "You have walked sixty miles to save the life of your enemy? That, in my judgment, puts the matter in a different light. I will grant you his pardon." It was made out and Pastor Miller proceeded on foot to the place of execution fifteen miles distant. He arrived just as the man was being carried to the scaffold. Seeing him in the crowd the man remarked, "There's old Pastor Miller; he's come all the way to have his revenge gratified by seeing me hung." These words were scarcely spoken till Pasto Miller handed him the pardon and his life was spared.

What Are People Christians For? (1018).

"The story is told how a man made an attempt to extort money from Mr. Gladstone, then in office as chancellor of exchequer, by threats of exposure; and how he instantly had the offender arrested. He directed his lawyers to see that the

man was properly defended. After he was sent to prison Mr. Gladstone wrote the governor in regard to the behavior of the delinquent, and finding it satisfactory, wrote that the prisoner should be let out. There was no worldly wisdom in it we all know. But what are people Christians for?"—Morley's Gladstone.

Christian Heroism in Meeting Evil (1019).

"A modern philosopher, Mr. J. S. Mill, has said that Christ, in giving such instructions, had done wonders for the ideal of humility and charity in the world, but had failed to inculcate manliness and that courage which was so amply developed by the laws of medieval chivalry. Mill thought, therefore, that the Christian ideal was one-sided, and required to be supplemented by the warlike type, which resents insult, and challenges the aggressor to defend himself. Bravery is of all qualities that which most attracts the human race; and Mill imagined that the Christian ideal without correction would have weakened this quality in men by directing them to accept insults without resenting them.

"Such an argument can only be plausible to those who are ignorant of early Christian history. The one feature which stands out prominently in the society founded by Christ and his apostles is the extraordinary heroism which was shown in the face of death and tortures, not only by men, but by feeble women and tender children. It amazed the heathen magistrates, who were striving after fortitude by the aid of philosophy. It amazed the wild savages, who mistook gentleness for cowardice, when they found that it was harder to terrify the missionary who came with the gospel than the invader who came in battle array. Any critic, therefore, who says that this word of our Lord tends to make men unmanly, can be silenced by an appeal to countless deeds of heroism done by Christians because they were the faithful servants of Christ."—Prof. J. P. Mahaffy, Ph. D., in Sunday School Times.

Vengeance is Mine (1020).

A person happened to complain, in the hearing of a Christian, of how his neighbors had been ill-treating him, and said he had a portion of vengeance in store for them. "You have stolen it, then," said the Christian, "for vengeance belongs to God." "I will repay, saith the Lord."

SERVICE LXXXIII (31).

His Great Address.

Human Relations—Enemies.—Matt. 5: 43-48.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Hating and loving enemies. I. It is natural and human to hate one who is constantly seeking my hurt or thwarting my purposes. Only divine love can meet human hate with pity and good will. II. A Christian should do more than sinners in loving because more has been done for him. God loved when we were sinners, and commended his love in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly—Christ prayed for his enemies, on the cross. If we are following him we must be like him in our treatment of just and unjust. III. Hating increases hate and hostilities—one blow brings another. Loving converts enemies into friends, one cannot fight love. It brings good will, peace, the Kingdom.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

How did the old law refer to the enemy?

State the difference between the letter and spirit of the law?

Why should Christians love more than others?

How does God manifest his love toward his enemies?

What does Jesus think of love that loves for the sake of love's reward?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Degrees of Love. (1021)—We are not required to regard with precisely the same feeling a Christian brother, and an openly profane and profligate person—a generous benefactor and a malignant inveterate enemy. It is not possible nor proper to cherish the same tender regard for strangers as for "those of our own household," the same gratitude to enemies as to benefactors, the same esteem for the bad as for the good. But we are sincerely to wish all men well, even our enemies; we are to desire their good; we are, as we have opportunity, to promote their happiness.—J. Brown.

Bitterness Unhealthy. (1022)—We are not only to allow no stirring of malice in our feelings, but we are to let kindly emotions bear fruit in words blessing the cursers, and in deeds

of goodness and, highest of all, in prayers for those whose hate is bitterest. We cannot hate a man if we pray for him; we cannot pray for him if we hate him. Our weakness often feels it so hard not to hate our enemies, that our only way to get strength to keep this highest, hardest commandment is to begin by trying to pray for the foe, and then gradually feel the infernal fires dying down in our temper, and come to be able to meet his evil with good, and his curses with blessings. It is a blessed possibility that Jesus opens for us, that our kindly emotions towards men need not be at the mercy of theirs to us.—Maclaren.

Universal Love. (1023)—The Old Testament often commended kindness and mercy, but it also sanctioned revenge and triumph over the fall of an enemy. But Jesus throws down the dividing prejudices of nationality, and teaches universal love without distinction of race, merit or rank. A man's neighbor, henceforth, was every one who needed help, even an enemy. All men, from the slave to the highest, were sons of one Father in heaven, and should feel and act towards each other as brethren. With a sublime enthusiasm and brotherly love for the race he announces a common Father of all mankind and one grand spiritual ideal in resemblance to him.—Geikie.

Love Because God Loves. (1024)—Love as God loves, regardless of merit and of the reciprocity of love; loving because you would be like God, loving because God has first loved you. —C. J. Vaughn.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Forgiveness Left Out (1025).

A woman confessed to her clergyman that she never used the Lord's Prayer in full, but regularly omitted the petition, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." "I don't forgive my debtors," she said. "I can't. So I don't think it is honest or fair to ask for God's forgiveness on that basis. It seems better just to leave out the whole subject." Practically, is not that what most of us, even if we repeat the entire Lord's Prayer, do in actual life—leave out the whole subject? Loving our enemies appears fantastic, and far-fetched. If they should be sorry and cease to annoy us, and humbly ask to be forgiven —why, we might be magnanimous, and consider. But as the last thing an enemy does is to run after us and apologize, we

are quite safe from intrusion on our forgiveness, and we know it, and are content.

Nevertheless, Christ's counsel of perfection, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you," stands as plain and specific as ever; and when a man carries it out to its fullest extent, as in this case, everyone recognizes, with a thrill, the splendor of character which is revealed. Human nature has inspiring capacities of transfiguration. It can cast away an ugly grudge, at Christ's word, and become heroic instead. Each of us has some dislike, some hatred, some quarrel, that Christ wishes us to rise above in heart and deed.

Without Malice (1027).

A man who had suffered a great wrong at the hands of another, and whose life was not hurt by it all, explains it by saying that he kept love in his heart amid all that he suffered. He never allowed himself to become bitter. Fresh-water springs are sometimes found beside the sea. When the tide is low they pour out sweet water. Then the brackish waves pour over them for hours, but when again the springs are left bare by the receeding of the tide, they are found sweet as ever. So it should be with the Christian's heart. We never should become embittered. Love should never fail.

Kind to Enemies (1028).

Jesus did not meet his enemies with resentment, and bitterness, and destruction. He said he had power to call legions of angels to his assistance, but instead, he submitted quietly to those who would harm him, lifting no finger in resistance. When the hot-tempered disciple drew his sword on his behalf, he bade him put the weapon back into its sheath. We may set it down, therefore, that Jesus did not treat his enemies with anger, but with forbearance, meekness and patience.

Receipt for Loving One's Enemies (1029).

You cannot help the feeling of sorrow, indignation or resentment at the treatment of your enemy but you do not need to entertain it. Some one has said, "You cannot help evil birds flying over your head but you can keep them from nesting in your hair. You can ask God's forgiveness and ask him to take away wrong feeling. He'll do his part if you do yours, then go and do something nice for your enemy. Its a sure cure every time, both for you and the other fellow.

SERVICE LXXXIV (32).

His Great Address.

Divine Relations—Giving to God.—Matt. 6:1-4.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Rewards of Giving—Men look upon outward appearance —ostentatious giving receives notoriety—prominence—glory of men. We may not sound our own trumpet, others do it for us—much of the giving to church and charity is noised abroad today, the course being defended by the fact that it influences others to give. Giving to men for self-satisfaction and good of others—given to men receives man's reward—no reward from the Father. III. True giving in secret—in partnership with God will be quiet, humble seeking to confer benefit rather than create obligation—heavenly in its qualities, God's love in it—it shall receive heavenly reward.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Why should almsgiving be in secret?

Why will those given to be seen of men receive no reward from the Father?

Do men seek glory in giving today?

What difference is there between earthly and heavenly rewards for almsgiving?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Quiet Giving. (1030)—Almsgiving has been exalted by the Scribes to an act in itself meritorious before God. The word "alms" and "righteousness" were, indeed, used interchangeably. "For one farthing given to the poor," said the rabbis, "a man will receive heaven." "He who gives alms will be kept from all evil." In an age when the religious spirit was dead, outward acts of religion were ostentatiously practiced, at once to earn a reward from God, and to secure honor for holiness from men. Religion was acted for gain, either present or future. Against such hyprocrisy Jesus warns his followers. They were to draw no attention to their charity, by having it proclaimed in the synagogue, or by ostentatiously giving it in the streets, to earn praise of men, but were to hide it as if they would not even let their left hand know what their right hand was doing. Sincerity only,

gave charity value. The amount was not essential; the spirit was all. Insincerity had no reward but the empty honor from men, got by deceit; sincerity was rewarded by their Father in Heaven, who saw the secret deed.—Geikie.

Reward of Men's Approval. (1031)—The mingling of regard for man's approbation with apparently righteous acts absolutely disqualifies them for receiving God's reward, for it changes their whole character, and they are no longer what they seem. Charity given from that motive is not charity, nor prayer offered from it devotion.

I think Christ's ear catches the screech of the brazen trumpet in a good many of the ways of raising and giving money, which find favor in the church today. This is an advertising age and flowers that used to blush unseen are forced now under glass for exhibition. No one needs to blow his own trumpet nowadays. We have improved on the ruder methods of the Pharisees, and newspapers and collectors will blow lustily and loud for us, and defend the noise on the ground that a good example stimulates others. Christ condemned ostentation. His followers too often try to make use of it.

In its coarsest forms this ostentation is out and out hypocrisy, which consciously assumes a virtue which it has not. But far more common and dangerous is the subtle, unconscious mingling of it with real charity. The hypocrisy which hoodwinks ourselves is more common and perilous than that which blinds others.—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Give What We Have (1032).

A colored man was asked if he had a thousand sheep would he give the Lord the tenth. He said of course he would. Then again—if you had three hundred sheep would you give the Lord one tenth? Of course I would. If you had two sheep would you give the Lord one? He said, "You get out of here, I have only two." We can give if we do not have money. People are dying for want of encouragement, love, sympathy and many things we may give them.

Serve, Please, Love (1033).

"O Lord, I pray
That for this day
I may not swerve
By foot or hand

From thy command,
Not to be served, but to serve.

"This, too, I pray,
That from this day
No love of ease
Nor pride prevent
My good intent,
Not to be pleased, but to please.

"And if I may,
I'd have this day
Strength from above
To set my heart
In heavenly art,
Not to be loved, but to love."

Selfish Goodness (1034).

"Yes'm, I'm a steppin' stone for Miss Lane, 'nd I've no great call to feel thankful for that, I'm sure," said Aunt Eliza, rather combatively. "When you keep tellin' me I ought to be grateful to her for comin' to read to me, 'nd bringin' me flowers, why, it shows you ain't lived as long as I have, 'nd been made a steppin' stone of. Many 'nd many's the time ladies has come to read to me since I've been lyin' here, 'nd after the first six months I could pick out the right kind in five minutes. Some of 'em care—yes, they care, even if they've never seen or heard of me till they came to the Home. My! I do love to have them sit here, 'nd I feel lonely when they go on, even if they've only been ten minutes with me. They're folks—that's what they are, 'nd they treat me like folks, 'nd their goodness 'nd kindness just helps. You don't have to remind me to be grateful to them —no, indeed!

"But Mis' Lane's kind—well, they're taking flowers to the sick and old, 'nd readin' to 'em, because it's an act of goodness. Tain't for me—'tis for themselves. I'm their steppin' stone to an eternal reward. 'Nd it ain't in natur' that a steppin' stone should warm up with gratitude. Goodness that's thinkin' of itself don't draw you to it—now, does it? It's better than badness, but it's only halfway to heaven, 'nd standin' still at that. It doesn't jest pick you up 'nd take you along a ways with it, like the goodness that forgets itself 'nd thinks only of helpin' wherever it can."

Weakness for God (1035).

To give his very best to God would save many a young man from the worst pitfalls that entrap him. It is because he gives the second best of his love, his strength, his ambition, to spiritual things, and keeps his best energies for the rest of life, that the average Christian is such a weak specimen. As George Meredith expresses it, "The reason so many fall from God is that they cling to him with their weakness, and not with their strength."

Forget the Debt (1036).

The moment we expect or demand gratitude, that moment we cease to deserve it. To give and then to claim because we have given, is to miss the whole beauty of giving.

"Let all the good thou doest to man
A gift be, not a debt;
And he will more remember thee
The more thou dost forget."

Right Hand—Left Hand (1037).

"I suppose that there is not a more liberal man in town than Mr. Blake," said an elderly man to a younger one recently, "and yet he told me the other day that he had found no such thing as gratitude in his experience. It makes one wonder whether it is worth while to be generous, to hear a thing like that."

"Mr. Blake's experience is probably quite correct," said the younger man. "I myself was once under an obligation to him, and I never rested till I had more than repaid it, and could be as ungrateful as I chose. You see, Blake expects you to be grateful, and that freezes up all the springs of it in you. If he has done you a favor, be sure that he remembers it whenever he sees you. That isn't calculated to make you fond of him—is it? Now, there's Hemingway, on the other hand. He is the most forgetful of men. He does you a good turn, and never thinks of it again. The rule of gratitude is that one of the parties has to remember; and as Hemingway refuses to, the other fellow must. Hemingway is positively embarrassed by the gratitude he gets. He shies off when you try to thank him. If Blake would only take a leaf out of his book, he'd never need to complain of the ingratitude of man. But as long as Blake remembers the obligations he has conferred, the other parties are going to forget them, every time. It's the rule, you know."

SERVICE LXXXV (35).

His Great Address.

Divine Relations—Praying to God.—Matt. 6: 5-15.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Praying to God.—I. What is prayer—communion—interchange of thought with God including supplication, confession, petition, thanksgiving, reverence, adoration. II. How shall we pray? "After this manner—in secret"—"after this manner" simply—acknowledging God's holiness—adoring his majesty, "Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory." III. For what shall we pray? That God's name be hallowed—His will done here in our hearts and home and nation as it is in Heaven—for the coming of his kingdom—for our daily bread—spiritual as well as physical—for forgiveness of sin—for God's keeping and delivering power. IV. To pray so that God can hear—our hearts must be right—"If ye forgive not men."

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What were the characteristics of a hypocrite's prayer?
How does the prayer of a true disciple differ?
What is the value of secret prayer?
Why are heathen prayers vain?
After what manner and for what things shall we pray?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Purpose of Prayer. (1038)—What is prayer for? Not to inform God, nor to move him, unwilling, to have mercy, as if, like some proud prince, he required a certain amount of recognition of his greatness as the price of his favors, but to fit our own hearts by conscious need and true desire and dependence, to receive the gifts which he is ever willing to give, but we are not always fit to receive. As St. Augustine has it, the empty vessel is by prayer carried to the full fountain.

There is everything in this prayer. There is help for the smallest wants and light for daily duties; there is strength for the hour of death and the day of judgment. No man can exhaust it. Every age may find in its simple syllables lessons for their new perplexities and duties.—Maclaren.

Prayer the Heart's Desire. (1039)—The great Father knows what we need before we ask him, and requires no lengthened

petitions. Prayer in the congregation is not forbidden, for Jesus himself frequented the synagogue, and joined in public devotions. But private prayer must be private, to guard against human weakness corrupting it into worthless parade. The simplest, shortest prayer, unheard by human ear, is accepted of God, if it rise from the heart; if the heart be wanting, all prayer is mere form.—Geikie.

Multiplied Prayers. (1040)—The Pharisees delighted in long prayers. "Every one," they said, "that multiplies prayer is heard." This notion also Jesus assailed with the sharp arrows of his scorn. It was, he declared a heathenish notion, and those sanctimonious Pharisees with their endless iterations were no better than the priests of Baal who cried until noon, "O Baal, hear us!" God is no reluctant deity to be wearied with importunate entreaties, but a gracious Father. "In praying do not babble like the heathen; for they fancy that in the multitude of their words they will be hearkened to. Be not like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of ere ye ask him."

This prayer has several striking characteristics. It is brief, recalling the Lord's warnings against the babbling prayers of the heathen and the long prayers of the Pharisees. It is simple, suiting the lips of a little child. It is catholic, addressing not the Lord God of Israel, but the Heavenly Father. It is spiritual, concerning itself primarily with God's glory, his kingdom and his well, and only secondarily with the worshiper's needs. And what are the boons which it craves? Bread, pardon and deliverance from temptation. It concerns itself exclusively with the things of God and the needs of the soul, asking only the simplest provision for the body.—David Smith.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Best Talent (1041).

The greatest and the best talent that God gives to any man or woman in this world is the talent of prayer. The best usury that any man or woman brings back to God when He comes to reckon with them at the end of this world is a life of prayer. And those servants best put their Lord's money to the exchangers who rise early and sit late, as long as they are in this world, ever finding out and ever following after better methods of prayer, and ever forming more secret, more steadfast, and more spiritually fruitful habits of prayer, till they literally pray with-

out ceasing, and till they continually strike out into new enterprises in prayer, and new achievements, and new enrichments. —Alexander Whyte.

The Blessing of Prayer (1042).

The strong man and the little child
One priceless blessing share—
The power to seek the Lord their God
By simple trustful prayer.

Let but thy prayer be earnest;
Thy God will answer thee,
And by the sight of childlike faith,
Great wonders shalt thou see.

Pray when you rise in the morning,
That God will bless your day;
Pray at the busy noontide, for guidance on your way;
Pray as the darkness deepens,
When work and care are o'er:
Pray with your mind and spirit, pray always, evermore.

Pledge Came Back (1043).

A poor man in China went to pray to an idol that had been placed outside the temple, promising that if his idol would answer him, he would give him his cow. The man's prayer was answered, and he could do nothing else but tether the cow to the idol's pedestal, and go sorrowfully home, wondering how he was to get on without her. Shortly afterwards, lifting up his eyes, he saw his cow coming along the road as fast as it could, dragging the idol after it.—Christian Herald.

Prayer Wheels (1044).

The Persian petition with his prayer wheel is no more vain than many an oft repeated prayer when one's heart is not right with God.

Answered Prayer (1045).

On his dying bed news came to Dr. Judson of God's gracious blessing upon an effort he had made, years before, for the Jews. After his first gladness at the tidings, a deep solemnity came over him. Never in his long career, he assured his wife, had he sincerely and trustfully asked God for anything but sooner or later, often in unexpected ways and by unlikely means, it had been granted him.

"Lord, Teach Us to Pray" (1046).

Luke 11: 1-2.

Oh, the love in His face
And the joy in His heart
As He looks into mine
While I'm praying apart,
And says, "When ye pray,
Say, Our Father."

Oh, the faith He begets
And the praise He inspires,
When I look back at Him
With the love that He fires,
And say, as I pray,
Oh, "Our Father."

—Joseph A. Richards.

Praying For Others (1047).

Lois is a small maiden with a quick temper and a habit of speaking hasty words that end in tears and trouble. Her grandmother, trying to help her to self-control, taught her David's prayer, "Keep the door of my lips," and urged her to remember it when her little school-mates vexed her. "How about the prayer, Lois?" asked the old lady when the child returned the next day. "Oh, I 'membered it," answered Lois, "but I prayed it for Grace 'stead of me. I said, 'Keep the door of Grace's lips,' 'cause I knew if she just wouldn't say such hateful things I'd be all right, anyway." Are not many of our older prayers very much in the same spirit? If God would only make the rest of the world do its duty by us, we could be trusted to do right by ourselves.

Definite Prayer (1048).

A little three-year-old had learned the Lord's Prayer from his sister, two years his senior, and was heard trying to repeat it as he understood it. "Deliver us from measles," was his rendering of one petition, and, after all, it was not a bad one. Of evil in general, he knew nothing, not even its name, but this particular malady had come within his childish ken, and his prayer was specific. It may well be questioned whether many of our prayers do not lose their power by their vagueness. We pray

for everything in general, with a hazy desire for a blessing, rather than for anything in particular with the faith that expects an answer.

God's Will (1049).

God's will is not set against our happiness, but for it. "Thy will be done," should be said hopefully and rejoicingly, not in tone of injured resignation to what cannot be helped. The worst misfortune that could happen to us would be the fulfilling of our own will instead of God's. God's denials mean gain, not loss. The wisest prayer is that in which we can say, with the poet.

"Go not far from me, O my Strength,
Whom all my times obey;
Take from me anything thou wilt,
But go not thou away."

Prayer and Money (1050).

Prayer may not bring money, but it brings us what no money can buy—a power to keep from sin and to be content with God's will, whatever else he may send.—George Eliot.

Not Too Near (1051).

"Thy kingdom come," we pray, and we are sincere in our prayers. We want it to come abroad, transforming the heathen world. We want it to come in our own land, uplifting and ruling its councils, purifying politics, and banishing evils. We want it to come in the church, bringing new earnestness, zeal, and activity, "live" meetings, and enthusiastic work. But how many of us really want it to come in our own hearts and lives; to have our business affairs conducted wholly by its laws; our pleasures, ambitions and social relations swayed only by its rule? Perhaps if we could hear our real prayer as it sounds higher up we should hear this familiar petition with a strange addition, "Thy kingdom come—but not too near."

SERVICE LXXXVI (34).

His Great Address.

Divine Relations—Repenting.—Matt. 6: 16-18.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Repentance and Penance. I. Repentance is a turning away from sin to righteousness. Penance is an effort to expiate one's own sin by self-inflicted punishment. It is a common characteristic of legalists, moralists—and hypocrites. II. Repentance loathes the sin, abhors self, shows deep sorrow and humility of heart instead of outer life in form—Penance manifests itself for complacency in self and approval of others. Repentance confesses sin and turns from it to God. Penance tries to cover sin by expiation and turns to self and others. III. Effects of Penance—spiritual blindness, pride and remorse—effects of repentance—peace—joy of pardon—joy in presence of angels.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Why does Jesus constantly discuss ceremonial law?

Why did the Jews fast?

What is the difference between fasting for penance and fasting as an act of worship?

Is fasting used with profit at the present day?

What are the effects of penance?

Of true repentance?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

A Cheerful Countenance. (1051)—If there is less fasting now than then, Christians still need to take care that they do not get up a certain "sad countenance" for the sake of being seen of men, and because such is understood to be the proper thing for a religious man. They have to take care, too, not to parade the feelings, of which fasting used to be the expression, as, for instance, a sense of their own sinfulness, and sorrow for the nation's or the world's sins and sorrows. There are deep and sorrowful emotions in every real Christian heart, but the less the world is called in to see them, the purer and more blessed and purifying they will be.—Maclaren.

Our Treasures Differ. (1052)—"Your Treasure" is probably not the same as your neighbor's. It is yours, whether you possess

it or not, because you love it. For what our Lord means here by "treasure" is not merely money or material good, but whatever each man thinks best, that which he most eagerly strives to attain, that which he most dreads to lose, that which, if he has, he thinks he will be blessed, that which, if he has it not, he knows he is discontented.

Where the Heart is. (1053)—Now, if that is the meaning of "treasure," then this great saying of my text is, as a matter of course, true. For what in each case makes the treasure is precisely the going out of the heart to grapple it, and it is just because the heart is there that a thing is the treasure.—Maclaren.

Treasures Draw. (1054)—Christ desires his people to lay up store in heaven, that they may have a heart in heaven; this is why he bids them to lift up their goods, that they may lift up their souls as well. For it is the power, which the "treasure" has inevitably to draw after it the heart, the fact that it is the loadstar to which the needle must point, which makes it of such consequence where this treasure is stored.—Bishop Trench.

Heart in Heaven. (1055)—No one ever went to heaven whose heart was not there before.—Robert Smith.

Christ Divides by Two. (1056)—It is a common idea that virtue shades off into vice by imperceptible gradations, and that the majority of men are neither bad nor good. Our Lord pronounces absolutely that in the last resort there are only two classes of men, those who are serving God, and those who are serving the world.—Dummelow.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

"Sorry Enough to Quit" (1057).

Many a sinner cannot find a place of repentance though he seeks it with tears because he is sorry for the consequences—his own wrecked life—estrangement from others instead of the sin itself.

The little boy said, when asked what repentance was, "It's being sorry enough to quit."

True Repentance (1058).

Gipsy Smith tells of a young woman who had perjured herself and injured the reputation of an innocent man by swearing falsely in court. After her conversion, she confessed, although it sent her to prison. That was true repentance.

SERVICE LXXXII (35).

His Great Address.

Divine Relations—Faith in God.—Matt. 6: 25-34.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Faith in God. I. What is Faith? Evidence of things not seen; dependence upon veracity of other persons or things. II. Does it make any difference in whom or what we believe. Human promise, plan, thought, help, fail, God has never failed to keep his word. To believe in truth is safe—strengthens, error misleads and destroys. III. A restful faith. One that works itself out along the line professed. The devils believe and tremble but do not change their lives. Those who trust in God, quietness and confidence in their strength, no matter what comes to their lives. IV. How shall we get it? "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." We come at least to trust reiterated promises that are kept.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What daily evidence have we of God's care for his world?
Why is anxiety heathenish?
Does growth depend upon us?
Why is man helpless before God's providences?
How can seeking God "add all these things?"

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

God Cares. (1059)—Jesus says three things regarding anxiety about worldly matters. First, it is unreasonable. Jesus throws his disciples back on the providence of God, his wise and almighty government of the world. Everything, great or small, has a place and a portion in the Creator's beneficent care. If God cares for lesser things, the birds, the flowers, nay, the very grass, will he not much more care for you, his children?

Again, anxiety about worldly matters is useless. "Which of you, though ever so anxious, can add to the length of his life a single cubit?" It is unavailing to fret about the future. If there be trouble in store for us, it will come, and our part is to do the present duty and leave the future in God's hands. Worry about the future simply embitters the present and does not avert trouble. The trouble which one anticipates seldom comes. The

morrow may have trouble in store, but it will not be the trouble which one anticipates.

Finally, anxiety about worldly matters is irreligious. "After all these things the heathen seek." And it is nothing strange that they, not knowing the Heavenly Father, should be anxious about food and raiment; but his children should be otherwise minded. "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

Anxiety about worldly matters is in truth practical heathenism, and Jesus bids his disciples decide which God they will worship.—David Smith.

Cheerfulness Christian Grace. (1060)—Our Lord regarded cheerfulness and joy, and the absence of care and anxiety, as the mark of a true Christian who puts his trust in God.—Dummelow.

Christ Forbids No True Joy. (1061)—Christianity forbids no necessary occupations, no reasonable indulgences, no innocent relaxations. It allows us to use the world, provided we abuse it not. All that it requires is, that our liberty degenerate not into licentiousness, our amusements into dissipation, our industry into incessant toil, our carefulness into extreme anxiety and endless solicitude.—Bishop Porteus.

Anxiety Dissipates. (1062)—Anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows; but it empties today of its strength. It does not enable you to escape the evil, it makes you unfit to cope with it when it comes. We have always strength to bear the evil when it comes. We have not strength to bear the foreboding of it. "As thy day, thy strength shall be." In strict proportion to the existing exigencies will be the God-given power; but if you cram and condense today's sorrows by experience, and tomorrow's sorrows by anticipation, into the narrow round of the one four-and-twenty hours, there is no promise that "as that day thy strength shall be."—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

In Time of Trouble (1063).

Say—

First—He brought me here; it is by his will I am in this strait place; in that will I rest.

Next—He will here keep me in his love, and give me grace in this trial to act as his child.

Then—He will make the trial a blessing, teaching me the lesson he means me to learn and working in me the grace he intends for me.

Last—In his good time he can bring me out again—how and when, he knows.

Say—I am here.

First—By God's appointment.

Second—In his keeping.

Third—Under his training.

Fourth—For his time—Andrew Murray.

Prayer and Doubt (1064).

The trouble with many of our prayers is that we offer them to the God who can do all things, and then immediately sit down to reckon with human probabilities. "If the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?" said a doubting lord in the famished city to a promise of plentiful food on the morrow. The sky still bent its unriven blue above the earth when the next day came, yet on ordinary carts, through the common city gates, came the train of provisions. The heavenly window that God uses for his marvelous displays of mercy and power are usually the common gates of earth, but they open in times and ways of which we have never dreamed.

Yesterday and Tomorrow (1065).

A certain man carried a big bag, under which he groaned and complained unceasingly. From none could he take help or comfort.

As he slowly journeyed on, toiling under his heavy burden, the Angel of Knowledge came to him and spoke kindly, saying:

"What carriest thou?"

And the man made answer surlily:

"My worries."

Then the Angel smiled pitingly upon him and said:

"Let us look into thy bundle and examine thy worries."

And so they looked in. But, lo! the bag was empty.

"Surely," cried the man, "there were two great worries too heavy for man to bear. But—ah, yes, I had forgot—one was a worry of yesterday, and so it is gone."

"And the other?"

"That—that was a worry of to-morrow and it is not yet here.'

Then the angel smiled upon the man with infinite pity, saying:

"Listen. He who bows himself down under the worries of yesterday and tomorrow wears himself out for naught. But he who carries only the worries of to-day hath no need of a bag for his sorrows. If thou wilt cast this black thing aside, and give all thy strength and cheer and courage to the things of to-day, real misfortune never can overcome thee."

Whereupon the man did as the Angel of Knowledge commanded.

And as he took up his journey and went swiftly on, his heart and hands were free to relieve many other wayfarers of their burdens, and to pluck for himself sweet fruits and flowers along the wayside.

And at last when he came to the setting sun it was with smiles and song.

A Trust Song (1067).

Though I cannot catch sight of the silver lining
Behind the clouds above,
I have faith to believe that the sun is shining
Some where—and God is love!

—Eben E. Rexford.

Worrying All the Time (1068).

"Yes'm, she's pretty well, mother is," said the old man, pausing with his foot on the wagon wheel to answer an inquiry concerning his wife; "pretty well, if only 'twasn't for worryin' about the children. 'Lizabeth's up to Conway this season, and mother's all the time afraid she'll be took sick away from home. Samuel's got a good place at Tanfield, and he's doin' well; but his boardin' place is across the river. Sometimes he goes by skiff, and mother, she can't get over the feelin' that he's likely to be drowned. The two younger ones is home yet, but she says she's anxious about the time John'll be wantin' to strike out for himself, and she's always been afraid we'd never raise Car'line. No'm, there's nothin' special the matter with any of them now, and the truck has done fine this year. Mother hain't had a touch of her rheumatism all summer, and she'd be pretty well off if it 'twasn't for worryin'. Christian? Bless you, yes, this forty year! She ain't afraid but what the Lord will take care of her and all the rest of the world, but seems like she ain't got faith to b'lieve he's to be trusted with the children."

SERVICE LXXXVIII (36).

Pictures of the Life.—Matt. 7: 1-6.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Judging Others. I. Presumptuous—usurping. God's prerogative—Satan called "Accuser of the Brethren." II. Blind—overlooks all good for one flaw. Tries to hide one's defects behind those of others. III. False—because general premises are formed from mistakes or defects instead of all qualities, good or bad. IV. Penalty—Judgment "measure for measure," which the censor or accuser is illy able to bear.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

To whom does judgment belong?

How do all just laws operate in administering penalties?

To what two things does the censorious spirit make us blind?

Why is a man who judges others a hypocrite?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

"Knockers." (1069)—The conduct toward others that Jesus here condemns is that unlovely spirit which views unfavorably the character and conduct of others, manifesting itself often in rash, unjust judgments upon them. If we are not ruled by the censorious spirit we may judge the character of others. "By their fruits" we are to know others both for their good and ours. The law of judging is sure. "With what measure ye mete" and its penalty is plainly evident in the blindness and hypocrisy which peers over one's own beam to spy out another's moat.

Cleaning Our Own Windows. (1070)—A woman in a tenement house kept talking to her neighbors about the people who lived across the way. Finally at the suggestion of a friendly visitor, she cleaned her own windows. "Who'd have thought it," she exclaimed, "that cleaning the windows would make such a difference in the looks of folks."

Judging Others. (1071).

Judge not; the workings of his brain
And of his heart thou canst not see;
What looks to thy dim eyes a stain,

In God's pure light may only be
A scar, brought from some well-won field,
Where thou wouldst only faint and yield.
—Adelaide A. Proctor.

Judging Virtues. (1072)—"How can we keep from judging? The power of seeing into character is to be coveted and cultivated, and the absence of it makes simpletons, not saints. The judging of which he speaks is one-sided, and fixes our faults, which it magnifies, passing by virtues. Literature and politics and social life are infested by it, and it finds its way into the church and threatens us all. The race of fault-finders we have always with us, blind as moles to beauties and goodness, but lynx-eyed for failings and finding meat and drink in proclaiming them."—Maclaren.

Judging Others. (1073)—"It is often," says Fenelon, "our own imperfection which makes us reprove the imperfection of others; a sharp-sighted self-love of our own, which cannot pardon the self-love of others. Divine charity makes great allowances for the weaknesses of others. Perfect virtue is meek, affable, and compassionate.—Fenelon.

Judge Not, Lest Ye Be Judged. (1074)—Miriam covered with leprosy as though the loathsome disease within were manifesting itself without because of her accusation of Moses; Haman, by his false accusations to destroy the Jewish nation in order to reach the man he hated; the accusers of Daniel made the shrieking prey of the lions; these are striking illustrations of the retributive law, "Measure for measure."

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Cutting His Candidacy. (1075)

The statement has been made that Thomas B. Reed with all his statesmanship and able equipment for the President's chair, cut off his own head by his habit of constantly picturing the faults and follies of his companions in cutting, sarcastic epigrams. He died a disappointed old man, with few pitying friends, shunned by all others.

Talk and Walk. (1076)

A man had three miles to walk to the station every day. One day a stranger who was driving asked him to ride. Seeing the badge of a society on the stranger's vest he immediately

began berating it. The stranger stopped his horse and invited him to get down. He might have had the ride and a chance for a helpful acquaintanceship, and saved himself a long, tiresome walk had he refrained from censorious judgment.

Prejudice. (1077)

"I believe prejudice is one of the most unreasonable things. How unreliable is the distorted sense of human character! At one time the road on which I was going made a sharp turn and I saw ahead of me a half dozen soldiers with guns. Their uniforms were blue, a color which was distasteful to me. Remembering that 'he who fights and runs away, lives to fight another day' I turned and went the other way, but this brought into view another half dozen men in the same colored uniform. The man who was in command and who ordered me to surrender (which I did) was only a colonel then, but before the war was over he was a major general. I looked at him on that day and thought that he was the meanest looking man that I had ever seen, and that there could be none other like him in the world. In later years I revered him. Forty-five years have gone by since the day he captured me and prejudice has gone with them. To his death he was my personal friend. God never intended that all the trees should be alike, but he made them different in order that they might each fulfil their separate missions. It is the same with men. We should not be all alike but should all make up the people of God."—Geo. W. Bain.

Refreshment for Critics. (1078)

A certain man placed a fountain by the wayside, and hung up a cup near to it by a little chain. He was told some time afterward that a great art critic had found much fault with the fountain's design. "But," asked the man, "do many persons drink at it?" Then they told him that many poor people, men, women and children, constantly slaked their thirst at the fountain. He smiled, and answered that he was little troubled by the critic's observation; adding only that he hoped that on some sultry summer's day the critic himself might fill the cup and be refreshed.

SERVICE LXXXIX (37).

Pictures of the Life.

The Sum of the Law.—Matt. 7: 12.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Sum of the Law—Six commandments were given in reference to man's relation to others. Man's dealing with man is an indication of his attitude toward God as told by the prophets over and over again in order to teach this truth. Jesus places before us—I. Its simplicity—a child may understand it. II. Reasonableness—we are not to expect more than we are willing to do. III. Its activity—we are to be willing to do all that which we expect from others.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Where had this law in substance been given before?

Why is it of so much importance?

How was it received by the hearers of Jesus?

Would the practice of this rule end competition?

Is there any circumstance in neighborhood or family relations to which it would not apply?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Forgive as We Forgive. (1079)—"Whatsoever ye would"—We have no right to expect more than we are willing to give of love, sympathy or hospitality, the forgiveness and forgetfulness of wrong—all those gracious ministries which we enjoy at the hands of others.

Christian in Business. (1080)—Men are asking everywhere this question: "Is it possible for a man to be a broker, a shopkeeper, a lawyer, a mechanic—is it possible for a man to be in a business of today, and yet love his God and his fellow man as himself?" I do not know what transformations these dear businesses of yours must undergo before they shall be true and ideal homes for the child of God; but I do know that upon Christian merchants and Christian brokers and Christian lawyers and Christian men in business today rests an awful and a beautiful responsibility to prove—if you can prove it—that these things are capable of being made divine; to prove that a man can do the work which you have been doing this morning, and will do this afternoon, and yet shall love his God and

his fellow man as himself. If he can not, what business have you to be doing them? If he can, what business have you to be doing them so poorly, carnally and unspiritually that men look on them and shake their heads with doubt? It belongs to Christ in men to show how a man, as he becomes a greater Christian, shall purify and lift the business which he does, and make it the worthy occupation of the son of God.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

A Rule That Worked (1081).

Two merchants in Chicago were rivals, one was a Christian. A cut rate war began and feeling was aroused which troubled the good man. He went to the pastor and told the circumstance, asking him for a cure. "I can't feel right toward him," he explained.

"Well, then, just do right. When you haven't an article, give instructions to your clerks to send customers across the street to him." It worked; there was the best of feeling.

As Ye Would (1082).

A clerk in the post office had made a mistake in regard to postage and forwarding mail. When the letter of inquiry came to the postmaster he answered, supposing he would never hear from it again. But the woman returned and came around with the evidence to the postmaster, who happened to be out at the time. His assistant brought the clerk in and he was confronted with letters and postals. He explained frankly how the mistake had occurred, and said he was sorry that it had caused such serious inconvenience. The woman, knowing that under the demerit system it would affect his standing, said: "No one's work is perfect. I make mistakes, too, so if you'll make the matter right so far as you can I'll overlook the rest. You can have these to destroy and I'll not speak to the postmaster."

Reaping Results of the Golden Rule (1083).

"Paper, lady, paper? Buy from him, he's smaller than I am." The lady smiled and said: "Now I suppose I shall have to buy one from both of you boys," which she did.

Widow and Orphan First (1084).

"Come on, neighbors; let's go and take care of Widow C——'s field first," said the minister, and his kindly word led to the custom in that community of caring for the widow and the orphan in a Christlike way.

SERVICE XC (38).

Before the Courts.

Thy Will Be Done.—Matt. 26: 36-46.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Thy Will Be Done. I. Apprehension of what God's will would be. "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful"—craving human companionship. II. Preparation by prayer for the great crisis. Supplication, "If it be possible." III. Submission to the will of the Father—"Nevertheless not my will." IV. Willing acquiescence. "Thy will be done," and again, "The hour is come."

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Why did Jesus go to Gethsemane?
Why did he want his disciples to watch with him?
What was most significant in his prayer?
How did he reprove the disciples?
How do we know he was victorious?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

God's Will (1086).—The humanity of Jesus is on trial. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience." And now comes the last great test ending in "Thy will be done" even when it meant submission to the worst that the malice and wrath of men and demons could devise. Having passed triumphantly through the supreme agony of Gethsemane, Jesus, the Son of Man, could face all subsequent events simply as a fragment of the divine will. Wherever there is complete self-surrender all circumstances, good or ill, become a part of his plan for us.

The Worst Death. (1087)—"Death approached him with every terrible accompaniment. He was to fall a victim to the treachery of a follower of his own whom he had chosen and loved. His life was to be taken by the hands of his own nation, in the city of his heart. He had come to exalt his nation to heaven, and had loved her with a devotion nourished by the most intelligent and sympathetic acquaintance with her past history and with the great men who had loved her before his coming as well as by the sense of all which he himself was able to do for her. But his death would bring a thousand blights

and curses to her. He clearly foresaw what was coming."—Stalker.

We Cannot Know. (1088)—"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death."

"What was it that ailed him? It was not the fear of death. He had conquered that. It was something more awful that shook the Redeemer's soul. Already he was entering into that black cloud which enfolded him as he hung on the cross. It is impossible for us to understand the experience of the Eternal Son of God at that supreme crisis, when he was 'carrying up our sins in his body to the Tree;' and where understanding fails, it becomes us to refrain our lips and be silent."—From The Days of His Flesh—Rev. David Smith.

Earth or Heaven. (1089)—A Prayer of Resignation. "From my cross, my burden, my adversity, I will not be relieved until it please thee to relieve me. Nay, I have no desire even to be in heaven, so long as it is thy pleasure that I should serve thee and thy church in this life. Let thy will be my heaven; thy counsel my wisdom; thy good pleasure my satisfaction."—Gotthold.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

God's Will (1090).

Ye tides that flow, and flood, and fall
  Harmonious to an higher power,
I would that in its rise and fall
  Its heights, its depths, in sun and shower,
My soul might never cringe nor cower,
  Nor shrink, nor slink, nor dash its spray
  Contrary to God's sovereign sway;
But to his will as to his Word
  Its rolling riplet, mighty main
  Might constant be and so remain.

—E. Jay Hanford.

Father Driving (1091).

The regenerated heart is attuned to its Maker. The will is completely swallowed up in his will. Then his ways are not grievous; Christian duties are not irksome; his yoke is not burdensome to bear. The life runs along smoothly without any losses of power and energy through friction. A mighty hand is guiding; an omnipotent, infinite mind is directing and controlling.

This is well illustrated by a little incident: We are told that a little boy once sat in front of his father, and held the reins that controlled a restive horse. Unknown to the boy, the reins passed around him and were also in his father's hands. He saw an occasion to pull them. Then with an artless simplicity the child looked around, saying: "Father, I thought I was driving, but I am not, am I?" Thus it is with the consecrated child of God; they do their own will, because it is also the will of God.—C. Lyn. Smith.

Prayer and Power (1092).

Elisha shut the door and prayed unto the Lord in that chamber small.

What mighty prayer arose, what grace was shed,
What gifts were given potent to wake the dead,
And still what miracles of grace are wrought
In many a lonely chamber, with shut door,
Where God our Father is in secret sought
And shows himself in mercy more and more!
Dim upper rooms, with God's own glory shine,
And souls are lifted to the life divine.—Ex.

My Soul Is Sorrowful (1093).

A friend once called the attention of Napoleon to the blanched face of an officer as he was marching into battle, as showing that he was a coward. Napoleon replied that that man was the bravest officer in his army; for he saw clearly and felt keenly his danger, and yet went forward into the thickest of the battle.

Sympathy Softens (1094).

The Rev. H. C. Trumbull, preaching to the inmates of a prison, said that the only difference between himself and them was owing to the grace of God. Afterward a prisoner sent for him and asked: "Did you mean what you said about sympathizing with us, and that only the help of God made you differ from us?" Being answered in the affirmative, the prisoner said, "I am here for life, but I can stay more contentedly if I have a brother in the world."

Happy is the man who has that in his soul which acts upon the dejected as April airs upon violet roots. Gifts from the hand are silver and gold, but the heart gives that which neither silver nor gold can buy.—Beecher.

SERVICE XCI.

Before the Courts.

Arrested.—Mark 14:43-52.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Arrested. I. The Assailants—accusers, soldiers and traitor disciple. II. Power of personality of Jesus, its effects on Judas and officers—the majesty of innocence and moral right. III. His Defenders—Peter's sword stroke—fleeing disciples. His submission affects their courage and they take to flight.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

How did Jesus deal with Judas?

What effect did the personality of Jesus have on the authorities?

What stinging reproof did Jesus administer to his assailants?

What reason did Jesus give for his arrest?

How did the quiet submission of Jesus affect his disciples?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Majesty of Jesus. (1095)—We marvel at the matchless majesty of the Master Man as he undergoes indignities at the hands of others. "Warning Judas aside, he stepped forward and addressed the soldiers; they were standing irresolute beside the guilty traitor, and, when Jesus said calmly, "I am he," perhaps making to advance towards them and surrender himself into their hands, they gave back in consternation and fell on the ground. His assailants bowed before the majesty of the Son of Man. It had overawed the lawless Nazarenes and stayed their wild hands when they would have hurled him over the precipice; and now in Gethsemane amid the weird shadows of the night, this band quail at his presence.

The Lord's calm self-possession at that dread crisis is revealed by his remonstrance with Peter and still more by what he said thereafter to the priests and Pharisees.—David Smith.

Needless Force. (1096)—This multitude was needless and useless, yet an admission of his power or proof of their ignorance of his character. He would have yielded to one person, the swords and staves were evidence of their fear. Note his trust in the Father and power of prayer while he fulfilled the will of God, the highest law.—Biblical Encyclopedia.

Effect of a Noble Nature. (1097)—It has been said of John Stirling: "It was impossible to come in contact with his noble nature without feeling one's self lifted up, as I ever felt when I left him, into a higher region of objects and aims than that in which one is tempted habitually to dwell."—Trench.

His Fortress. (1098)—When Stephen of Colonna fell into the hands of his base assailants and they asked him in derision, "Where is now your fortress?" "Here," was his bold reply, placing his hand on his heart.—Smiles.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Arrest of Savonarola (1099).

The murderous mob rushed into the cathedral of St. Mark's and, while the friars were chanting vespers, rained a storm of stones upon the worshipers. Unknown to Savonarola a few weapons had been stored in the cellar, and contrary to his wish his friends tried to defend him. There was riot and shooting before the altar. He forbade all violence, declaring his willingness to surrender that bloodshed might be avoided. The parting from his brethren showed a spirit of resignation and courage. Late at night, bound and surrounded by a howling mob, that heaped insults, imprecations, and blows upon him, the fallen leader was dragged to prison.

The Devil's Test (1100).

A soldier in the East Indies—a stout, lion-hearted man—had been a prize fighter and a terror to those who knew him. He was converted, and the lion became a lamb. Two months afterward in the mess room some of those who had been afraid of him before began to ridicule him. One of them said, "I'll put it to the test whether he is a Christian or not;" and taking a basin of hot soup he threw it into his bosom. The whole company gazed in breathless silence, expecting that the lion would start up and murder him. But after he had torn open his waistcoat and wiped his scalded breast he turned round and said, "This is what I must expect if I become a Christian."

The Sufferings of Christ Win Men (1101).

When St. Remy was preaching before King Clovis of France, telling with passionate pathos the story of Christ's sufferings and death, the monarch suddenly sprang from his throne and, grasping his spear, cried, "Had I been there with my brave Franks I would have avenged his wrongs."

SERVICE XCII (40).

Before the Courts.

A Test in Loyalty.—John 18: 15-25.

MOMILETIC HINTS.

A Test in Loyalty.—I. Human friendship—sometimes fails to understand—deserts us in our time of need—denies us for its own selfish safety.

II. Friendship of Jesus remains faithful, though we are faithless—never forgets—always remembers—strengthens and transforms ours into a loyalty like his.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What did the friends of Jesus do?

What did Jesus think of their efforts?

How did Jesus try to spare his friends?

What change in the character of Peter was made by the friendship of Jesus?

Contrast the difference in the loyalty of John and Peter.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Deserted. (1102)—Humanly speaking, it is easy to face the crises in life, when one has a strong backing in friends, but strength and courage give way before the desertion of those we love in our time of need. Though denied and deserted, Jesus, the Friend of Sinners, had time even under trial for remembrance, —"the Lord turned and looked on Peter." In the darkest hour of his greatest agony he remembered not only his mother and the disciple whom he loved. He did not forget to pray also for the enemies who hated him.

"To one and all declarations Peter returned a vehement denial, accompanying it with oaths. The echo of his words had scarcely died out, when loud and shrill the cock crowing was heard, the sound wakened his memory. He looked up; he saw, how up there, just at that moment, the Lord turned round and looked upon him, yes, in all that assembly, upon Peter. His eyes searched down to the depths of Peter's heart, they pierced through all self-delusion, shame and fear; they reached the man, the disciple, the lover of Jesus. He rushed out from the place of denial into the night, yet a night lit up by the star of promise."—Christ prayed for him.—Edersheim.

Peter's Morning Prayer. (1103)—"It was enough. The glance of Jesus like lightning, revealing an abyss, brought back to its nobler self the honest heart of Peter that for a time had been alarmed into superficial unfaithfulness, and threw an awful brightness into the depths of sin on whose edge he stood. All his weakness and wretched fear rose in his thoughts, and with them the remembrance of his boastings, so miserably belied. Christ's words, which he had so warmly repudiated, had come true. What a contrast between the grand strength of his Master and his own weakness! It is a touching and beautiful tradition, true to the sincerity of his repentance, that, all his life long, the remembrance of this night never left him, and that morning by morning, he rose at the hour when the look of his Master had entered his soul, to pray once more for pardon." —Geikie.

Fill Up Our Lives. (1105)—My Saviour! Fill up the blurred and blotted sketch which my clumsy hand has drawn of a Divine life, with the fullness of thy perfect picture. I feel the beauty I cannot realize; robe me in thine unutterable purity.—F. W. Robertson.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

A Test in Loyalty (1106).

"My mother, sir!" says the wild youth. "I would walk fifty miles on burning metal for her!" But his mother wants no filial piety so tragical as that, but she would like him home a little earlier at night. Don't say that you would lay down your life for her—lay down your glass, your pipe, your cards; lay down something as an installment. "My pastor! Sir, I would die for him!" No, he wants nothing so tragic as that, all he wants is for you to come in time for worship and pay your subscription occasionally.—Parker.

Changed by Contact (1107).

Just a piece of common window glass; and yet after its cheek had pressed a bit of radium for a little while, that wonderful substance had changed it to azure. More wonderful still was the effect with a little lump of corundum. Just one month of contact and it took on the yellow of the topaz. Blue corundum changed to the hue of the emerald, while a bit which had been violet was now as brilliant as a sapphire. Changed by a touch from almost a worthless thing into a lovely jewel!

How it helps to live near a good man! Grander still, to be the one to live near the heart of the Master. Somehow we do get so warped in this world. The life is often bent and cramped by evil so that it can scarcely be recognized. Bits of glass today. But with our hearts close to the heart of Jesus, with our purposes all swallowed up in his will, with our acts all directed by his hand, we may lose the old stain of sin and rise to be jewels in his kingdom. Full of sin when we get close to him, shining like the stars after he has wrought his wonderful work in us.—Unidentified.

Saved by Faithful Love (1108).

A Christian woman had a drunken husband. Night after night as she prayed for him he would mock and throw his shoes at her. But her patience and fidelity never failed. At last he went to a revival service. After coming home in the night he wakened her. "Jennie," he said, "pray for me," and she did.

The Friendship of Jesus Christ (1109).

Two men once stopped Col. Hadley of Water Street Mission and asked him if he would carry a piece of carpet to their pal in the Tombs. This set him to thinking about the friendship among thieves, and brought a desire to show the criminal to whom he was going what the friendship of Christ was like. For twelve years he worked, forgiving, overlooking, helping, before this man was able to stand with an established Christian character. He told this story one morning at an institution where men are trained for Christian work. At its close one of the students rose and asked, "May I say a word? I'm that man. I want the men here to know what the friendship of Jesus Christ has done for me."

The Power of a Christ-filled Life (1110).

In speaking of the power of true Christian character over a mind filled with prejudice, Sir Henry M. Stanley says: "In 1871 I went to Africa as prejudiced against religion as the worst infidel in London. But when I found a solitary old man there, I asked myself: 'Why does Livingstone stop here? What is it that inspires him?' For months after we met I found myself wondering at him carrying out the words, 'Leave all and follow Me.' But little by little, seeing his piety, his gentleness, his zeal, his earnestness, and how he went quietly about his business, I was converted by him, although he had not tried to do it."

SERVICE XCIII (41).

Before the Courts.

A Traitor's Reward.—Matt. 27:3-10.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

A Traitor's Reward. I. Remorse for betraying one who was innocent. Sorry for the consequences, not for the sin itself.

II. Loathing for the gains of greed. Judas thought Jesus could save himself and he might meanwhile make his own profit from the priests. When he understood that it was really blood money he loathed the coins and tried to give them back. It is sometimes too late for restitution.

III. Suicidal Despair. There was no true repentance so bitter reflections pursued him. The consequences of an act can never be undone.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What bargain had Judas made with the authorities?

What means did he take to apprehend Jesus?

Notice the difference in treatment of him by the priests after he had been the tool of their purpose.

How do the acts of repentance and remorse differ?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Canker at the Root of Judas' Character. (1112)—Judas is the by-word of the human race, yet he was not such a monster of iniquity as to be utterly beyond comprehension or even sympathy. He was a man of superior energy and administrative ability, but there was a canker at the root of his character which gradually absorbed all that was excellent in him. The views of the other apostles were perhaps as worldly to begin with as his, but the history of their intercourse with the Master was totally different. They became ever more spiritual, he ever more worldly.—Stalker.

The End of Sin. (1113)—"Truly, man knows the beginning of sin, but who knows the issues thereof?" Without a qualm Judas had carried his crime through. When it was accomplished he recoiled affrighted, stricken by remorse. When sentence was pronounced, his last hope was swept away. A desperate device occurred to him: might he not even now cancel the bargain? Clutching the accursed shekels in his wild hands, he con-

fronted the Sanhedrists and, addressing the High Priests, who had paid him his price, cried: "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood!" "What is that to us? Thou must see to that?" Spurning the wretch, they passed on and betook themselves to the Holy Place. He followed them to the threshold, and e'er they could close the entrance hurled the coins into the sanctuary. Before the priests had recovered from their astonishment he was gone. "He went away and hanged himself."—Smith.

Results of Sin. (1114)—That is the bitterest of all—to wear the yoke of your own wrong-doing.—George Eliot.

The seeds of our own punishment are sown at the same time we commit sin.—Hesiod.

There is more bitterness following upon sin's ending, than ever there was sweetness flowing from sin's acting.—Dyer.

You that sin for your profits, will never profit by your sins. —Ibid.

> The fruit of sin, goodly and fair to view,
> Deceives us in its beauty. Pluck'd, it turns
> To ashes on our lips. —Webster.

Men Who Some Day Wish They Had Never Been Born. (1115)—Those who sell Jesus for gain.

Those who deny Jesus as the Way, Truth and Life.

Those who desert Him for their own way and will.

Those who bring dishonor upon Him by insincerity and carnal service.—Simeon.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Guilty Men Are Most Easily Frightened (1116).

Rowland Hill was one dark night traveling with his wife in a phaeton, near London, when they were stopped by three highwaymen. The preacher thought he would try the effect of noise upon their cowardly consciences; so he bawled and screamed out a succession of unearthly noises till one of them exclaimed, "Oh, we've stopped the devil by mistake!" and away they scampered.

After the murder of Darnley some of the wretches who were concerned in it were found wandering about the streets of Edinburgh crying penitently and lamentably for vengeance on those that caused them to shed innocent blood. "Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all."

The Possession of Money Involves Special Dangers (1117).

Man has been compared to a target struck by the arrows of worldly trouble. If so, the rich man has only the questionable advantage of being a broader target than his neighbors.

See there two snails. The one hath a house, the other wants it. That which hath a house hath more shelter, the other more freedom. The former draws its load over a stone with great stress, and if the passage proves straight finds no entrance; but these make no difference to the latter.—Bishop Hall.

Those who see glittering heaps of gold are in such haste to grasp the treasure they leave the beaten road of honest labor and finally get into the ditch. It is as hard to keep riches without sin as to get them.—Spurgeon.

Defrauding Others (1118).

Wrongdoing of any sort always robs others. My selfishness, for example, means that I take what some one else ought to have. As has been well said, "My luxury spells another man's need unsupplied." The truth of that may well startle us out of all luxury, even to the extent of a cent, for the rest of our lives. It is not agreeable to think of self-pleasing as robbery and cruelty, but that is the simple fact. We are our neighbors' keepers, and in this we share the very honor and glory of God himself. Are you living the shared life of one who, though he was rich, yet for your sakes became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich?—Sunday School Times.

Types of Judas (1119).

It is said that Robespierre, the man who sent thousands to the guillotine, had in his younger days resigned his office as a provincial judge because it was against his conscience to pronounce sentence of death on a culprit found guilty of a capital offense.

Alcibiades, the famous Greek, who to unbounded ambition, unscrupulousness and licentiousness, united a warm attachment to the greatest and best of Greeks, is a more remarkable example of men like Judas. The man who in after years betrayed the cause of his native city, and went over to the side of her enemies, was in his youth an enthusiastic admirer and disciple of Socrates.—Peloubet's Notes.

The effect of treacherous dealing on one's own character is plainly set forth in the transformation of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

SERVICE XCIV (42).

Before the Courts.

Testimony Before Pilate.—John 18:28—19:16.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

I. Pilate's Questions:

"What accusation bring ye against him?"

"Art thou the King of the Jews?"

"What hast thou done?" "What is Truth?"

II. Jesus' Accusers. Their quibbling, "If he were not an evildoer we would not have delivered him." Their falsehoods—"We found him perverting our nation—forbidding to give tribute to Caesar and saying that he himself is Christ a king." "He stirreth up the people throughout all Judea, even unto this place." Their craftiness—"It is not lawful for us."

III. Jesus as Witness and Defendant—Interrogates his judge as one with authority. Ignores false accusations. Defines his kingdom now as spiritual (His nation has rejected Him). States his mission is to bear witness to the truth.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Why did the Jewish authorities bring Jesus before Pilate?

How did they try to prejudice Pilate?

What conversation took place between Pilate and Jesus?

What was Pilate's first verdict?

What was Jesus' attitude toward false accusers?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

You, King of Jews. (1121)—Pilate asked in pitying wonder, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" thou poor, worn, tear-stained outcast in this hour of thy bitter need—oh, pale, lowly, friendless, wasted man, in thy poor peasant garments, with thy tied hands, and the foul traces of the insults of thine enemies on thy face, and on thy robes—thou, so unlike the fierce, magnificent Herod, whom this multitude which thirsts for thy blood acknowledged as their sovereign! Art thou the King of the Jews?" "What hast thou done?" Done? Works of wonder and mercy and power and innocence, and these alone. Yes, He is a King; but not of this world; not one for whom His servants would fight." A king not in this region of falsities but

one borne to bear witness unto the truth, and one whom all who were of the truth should hear. "Truth," said Pilate impatiently. "What is truth?"—Farrar.

What Is Truth? (1122)—"What is truth?" The truth for thee, Pilate, is that thou art a guilty, cowardly wretch, who through fear of the multitude didst, contrary to thine own conviction, betray the innocent blood!—Jay.

Truth (1123).

Marble and recording brass decay,
And, like the 'graver's memory, pass away;
The works of man inherit, as is just,
Their author's frailty, and return to dust;
But Truth divine forever stands secure,
Its head as guarded, as its base is sure;
Fixed in the rolling flood of endless years,
The pillar of the eternal plan appears;
The waving storm and dashing wave defies,
Built by that Architect who built the skies.

—Cowper.

No Fault in Jesus. (1124) — Pilate was moved and touched. A judicial mind, familiarity with human nature, which had given him some insight into the characters of men, showed him that Jesus was not only wholly innocent, but infinitely nobler and better than his raving, sanctimonious accusers. He saw before his tribunal an innocent and high-souled dreamer, nothing more, and pronounces his first emphatic, unhesitating acquittal. "I find in Him no fault at all."—Farrar.

The Perfection of Christ. (1125)—The best of men have their defects, and the nearer we come to them the more disposed we are to say, "We have seen an end of all perfection." Men whom we have loved and almost worshiped in the distance have, as we approached them, appeared but men. But the nearer you approach Christ, the more you inspect his character, the brighter does his innocence shine.—Thomas.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Imitating the Silence of Christ (1126).

There lived in a village near Burnley a girl who was persecuted in her own home because she was a Christian. She struggled on bravely, seeking strength from God, and rejoicing that she was a partaker of Christ's sufferings. The struggle

was too much for her, but He willed it so; and at length her sufferings were ended. When they came to take off the clothes from her poor, dead body, they found a piece of paper sewn inside her dress, and on its was written, "He opened not His Mouth."—Baxendale.

Speaking Before the King of Kings (1127).

When Latimer was Royal Chaplain, he one day exclaimed: "Thou art going to speak before the high and mighty King Henry the Eighth, who is able, if he thinks fit, to take thy life away. But Latimer, Latimer, remember also, thou art about to speak before the King of kings and Lord of lords; take heed thou dost not displease Him."—New Test. Anecdotes.

What Is Truth? (1128).

A certain rabbi, speaking of the conciseness of the truth according to the Mosaic Dispensation, declared he could tell the whole truth while he stood on one foot. But much more concise still, according to the Christian Dispensation, the whole truth can be told in a breath. And to be born of the Spirit of God, and to know Jesus Christ as one's personal Saviour, is the whole truth in a few words. And that it has been the purpose of our Lord to make the truth so plain, brief and reasonable we cannot fail to see. It is written so plainly that "wayfaring men, though fools, might not err therein."

Primitive Christians loved the simple truth and obeyed it. They attended the house of the Lord for devotion and instruction. They were there to know God's will and his pleasure concerning them. They received what thy sought for—spiritual power. The hungry lions, the stake and place of torture could not shake their faith in God nor intimidate them in their vindication of truth.—Christian Herald.

Witnessing Before Judges (1129).

Blandina was one of the early Christian martyrs. They roasted her on a red-hot iron chair, put her in a net and exposed her to the horns of the wildest oxen; whirled her in instruments of torture till her senses were lost day after day. At every interval when strength came back she called out: "I am a believer in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God, who is with me. I am a Christian." So she passed hence, but speaks to us yet as one living.—Lives of Church Leaders.

SERVICE XCV (43).

Before the Courts.

Christ or Barabbas.—Mark 15: 6-19.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Place of Compromise. I. Cowardly—Through fear of self for safety an expedient was suggested that would avoid personal decision and shift responsibility to others.

II. Deceiving. It did not turn out as expected. The crowd took advantage of cowardice and forced an immediate issue.

III. Compelling. Having suggested an expedient, shifted his responsibility and left the choice to an unreasoning mob, he is now compelled by greater fear to decide in their favor though he knows them to be guilty and their victim innocent.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What misgiving did Pilate have?

What motives did Pilate attribute to the priests?

How did Pilate try to awaken sympathy for Jesus?

What alternative did he offer the people?

Was the voice of the people in this instance the voice of God?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Pilate's Desire. (1130)—Pilate had already made one vain attempt to save Him, and now anxious to end the matter, summoned the accusers once more to the tribunal. Coming forward, he reminded them of their custom that he should release a prisoner to them at the Passover. The proposal threatened to overthrow the scheme of Caiaphas and his party, but with quick presence of mind they determined to turn attention from it by raising a counter proposal flattering to local passion.

"Ask him to release Barabbas to you, and not this man," shouted they to the mob. It was a dextrous stroke, for Barabbas had been condemned for an offense which made him a martyr in the eyes of the people. He had risen against the Roman; he was a patriot, a zealot for the Temple and the Law,

while Jesus was the enemy of things as they were and demanded reforms. The cry for Barabbas raised by the high priests was caught up by the whole crowd. Certain that the high priests had accused Him from envy at His influence with the people, and hatred of Him for opposition to themselves, he once more turned to the crowd. "Which of the two," cried he, "do you really wish me to release to you?" "Barabbas," roared the multitude.

Pilate was not required to give the people their choice. He knew not the forces he was opposing. A thousand voices cried only, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"—Geikie.

Sow a Habit, Reap a Character. (1131)—Character is a result of choices. Pilate had shifted his responsibility to the priests and the mob and now whether he will or no must abide by their ultimatum. The man who chooses expedients or compromise with evil often finds himself compelled by the force of circumstance to carry out a totally unexpected and unwished-for line of action. "What shall I do then with Jesus?" The crowd had already chosen Barabbas, and left Jesus on Pilate's hands.

What Will You Do with Jesus? (1132)—Ah, Pilate, that is your question, and you must answer it! Whatever the crowd says, you must answer it! "Crucify him!" shouts the mob. But Pilate's sense of justice asserts itself. "He is innocent. I have declared him such again and again. Why should I crucify him?" You thought of becoming a Christian and you consulted others. And they only ridiculed your thought and desire. You realized you must answer the question and sought to rid yourself of responsibility by asking others, "What shall I do with Jesus?" But you must settle it yourself.

The world, the nation, the church, the individual, must all answer the question. Shall it be a divine, an exalted Christ, or shall men say, "Away with him! Crucify him!"

When the destructive critic would rob the gospels of the supernatural, and the Unitarian would rob him of his deity, and the world would crucify him, it is for me to answer the question, not as the destructive critics would, not as the Unitarian, not as the mob or the masses might, but as is reasonable and right. Nor can I rid myself of this duty by washing my hands in water. Pilate could not do it. I cannot.—Rev. W. H. Jordan.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Barabbas or Christ? (1133).

Men are making essentially the same choice today. There is Barabbas! there is Christ! When a sharp moral crisis is reached, men generally know the side they ought to choose. Right and wrong, truth and error, sin and holiness, the world or God—this is just the old Jerusalem scene back again. Such a choice fixes character. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." When one wills strongly, he moulds himself in the likeness of the thing he chooses. The old Castilian proverb says, "Every man is the son of his own work."—C. S. Robinson.

Called to Choose (1134).

Called to choose between Christ and the material benefits to which they had been accustomed from childhood, called to take their stand either with the new Friend or with the old associates among whom they had always lived—that was the situation in which a number of low-caste Hindoos found themselves. Their story is told as follows:

In one village, writes the Rev. Mr. Simpson of the Wesleyan Mission, we had to baptize some forty people. Two nights before the baptism the head men of the village came down, angry, furious, because this work had been going on, with all the bitter antagonism of Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen because their craft was in danger. They came down at 10 o'clock at night, called the men out of their houses, and said to them:

"Now, then, those men that are going to become Christians, stand on one side; those who are going to be with us, stand on the other side. From the men who became Christians we take away work and land; we deny them the village washerman; we deny them the village barber; we deny all we can. Now, those who are going to be Christians, go on that side."

Every one that was under instruction for baptism went and took his place as a Christian.

Opportunity (1135).

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of truth with falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
And the choice goes by forever, 'twixt that darkness and that light.—Lowell.

SERVICE XCVI (44).

Before the Courts.

Pilate's Decision.—John 19: 4-16.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Pilate's Decision. I. Worldly policy was the main motive in deciding the case. II. It subdued the strongest convictions of duty. III. It brought him into bondage to those he should govern. IV. It derived strength from his previous misdeeds.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

In what way did Pilate appeal to the people?
How did he try to repudiate his responsibility?
Why did he write the inscription for the cross?
What motive moved him to overcome his scruples?
What effect did his decision have on his own character?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Beginning and End. (1137)—The trial of Christ was marked by the praiseworthy manner in which it was opened by Pilate and the pitiable manner in which he concluded it. Pilate is a type of the natural man in his relation to Christ.—Lange.

Pilate Saved Himself. (1138)—The sea of upturned faces broke into wild uproar once more. "I must yield while I can and save myself," thought he. Poor mockery of a ruler! Set by the Eternal to do right on the earth, and afraid to do it! Strong enough in his legions, and in the truth itself, to have saved the Innocent One, and kept his own soul—he could only think of the apparently expedient. Type of the politician of all ages, who forgets that only the right is the strong or wise!

Innocent Blood. (1139)—"What the priests said to Judas, Pilate said to the priests. Matt. 27:4, 24. With curious verbal correspondence, he repeats the words of Judas and of the priests. "Innocent blood!" said Judas. "I am innocent of the blood of this just person," says Pilate. "See thou to that," answered they. "See ye to it," says he, shoving off his responsibility upon them, and they are quite willing to take it.

These three, Judas, the priests and Pilate, suggest a threefold way in which conscience is perverted. Judas represents the agony of conscience; Pilate the shuffling of a half-awakened

conscience; those priests and people the torpor of an altogether misdirected conscience.—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Pilate's Decision (1140).

Pilate wrote, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." He would not change it. Many things he wrote that he could not change. He wrote his own name in history in Christ's blood. It is indelible. He wrote his own life on Palestine in injustice; it is unalterable. What are you writing? You write with a pen, and with a life.

When Queen Elizabeth had put her name to Mary of Scots' death warrant, she trembled for a time, then sent in haste to cancel the order. Too late. The writing could not be undone. It is a serious thing to write your name unless you consider well that which is above. Go write: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of my world," and sign your name. In eternity you can say to him, "What I have written, I have written."

Compelled by Circumstances (1141).

"My good man," said the king, addressing Palissy, the potter, "for many years you have been in the service of our family, and we have suffered you to retain your religion amidst fires and massacres, but at present I find myself so pressed by the Guises and my own people that I am compelled to give you into the hands of my enemies."

"Sire," replied Palissy, "I am ready to yield up my life for the glory of God. You say you feel pity for me. It is rather I that should pity you, who utter such words as these, 'I am compelled.' This is not the language of a king; and neither yourself nor the Guises, with all your people, shall compel me, for I know how to die."

Reaping Decisions (1142).

"It's no use for you to talk to me any longer," said a young man to his minister. "There was a time when I was sorry for my sins, but I kept on and now the spirit has left me. I don't care any more. I can do anything and not be sorry."

SERVICE XCVII (45).

His Crucifixion and Burial.

The Way to Golgotha.—Luke 23: 26-49.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Way to Golgotha. I. The victim led by the hands of men; the sin offering led by the hand of the Father. II. Strewn with thorns of wickedness. III. Moistened with tears of pity. IV. Lighted by the majesty of Jesus.—Lange.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What effect did Christ's patient endurance of suffering have upon those who beheld it?

Who was compelled to bear the cross?

Is cross bearing an essential part of Christ following?

What was his last message to the women of Jerusalem?

Give the value of prophecy as an internal evidence of the truth of God's Word.

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

The Trial. (1143)—No sooner had sentence been pronounced than the soldiers proceeded to carry it out. Then from the pile which lay always ready to hand, they selected a cross and laid the ghastly gibbet on His shoulders. A criminal was led to the place of execution preceded by a herald carrying a board whereon his name and his offense were written that all might know who he was and wherefore he had been condemned. The prisoners were escorted by a detachment of soldiers under the command of a centurion, and staggering under their crosses, they were driven forward by lash and goad. John, the best beloved of His disciples, was there when the procession started. It would seem, however, that he hastened away to inform Mary of the issue of the trial. No disciple attended Jesus on the way to his death; but there were women in the crowd and they were moved by the spectacle of his woe.—David Smith.

Breaks All Hearts. (1144)—The potential power of the Saviour's suffering is immeasurable. The simple story breaks the hard world's heart; savage cannibal, stolid Esquimaux, and heathen enthusiast alike are moved by it to wonder and to tears, then to transformed life.

Breaks Silence to Sympathize. (1145)—The beams, laid on Jesus, soon proved too heavy, in the hilly streets, for his exhausted strength, and his slow advance with them so delayed the procession that the guard grew impatient, and having seized a passer-by coming from the country, Simon, from Cyrene, compelled him to bear them.

From the moment of his declaring himself the Messiah, and being condemned to die for doing so, Jesus had had nothing more to say to his judges. But his lips, shut for hours, opened once more on the way to his death.

A great crowd followed, both of men and women, the latter filling the air with loud lamentations. Touched with their grief, so strangely sweet after such a long bitterness of mockery and clamorous hatred, the Innocent One stopped on his way and, turning to them, bade them lament not for him but for themselves.—Geikie.

Patient Suffering. (1146)—Suffer in patience, though it seems to thee that thou doest nothing, and art idle, being so dumb and resigned. Yet it is of infinite fruit. The blinded beast that turns the wheel of the mill, though it seeth not, neither knows what it does to give life to others, yet doeth a great work in grinding the corn.—Molinos.

Present with Martyrs. (1147)—It is the testimony of many of those who suffered for the faith in those terrible days of burning at the stake, that they gladly welcomed the torture for the precious consciousness it gave them of the personal presence of their Saviour.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Fellowship (1148).

Soldiers are bound by one of the strongest ties in the world, one of the ties which binds the heart of every Christian to the cross of Jesus—the fellowship of suffering.

Sympathy and Aid (1149).

A worn-out soldier earned his living in Vienna by playing the violin. He grew feeble and could make no more music. As he sat there weeping a man took his violin and played such exquisite music that the crowd grew, people wept and shouted, and the old man's hat was filled again and again with coin. It was Bucher, the greatest violinist in the realm. He endured the poor man's disgrace, and by sacrifice lifted him up. So Christ pities our spiritual penury.

SERVICE XCVIII (46).

His Crucifixion and Burial.

At the Cross.—Mark 15:33-35; Luke 23:33-42; John 19:19-35.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

A King on the Cross. I. His majesty. II. His victory. III. The foundation of His kingdom. IV. His jurisdiction. V. His government.—Krummacher.

The Superscription—It was: I. Read of all; II. Vexatious to many; III. Obstinately defended by one. Learn (1) Wilt thou pass it unheeded? (2) Wouldst thou at all alter it? (3) Wilt thou not accept it?—Lange.

Fellowship in Suffering (1149).

The picture, which furnished the keynote of inspiration for all that wonderful interpretation of the life of our Lord given to the world by James Tissot, shows a couple of peasants by the wayside. Blood streams from the man's leg, the woman looks pitifully helpless; but, separated from them as by a veil of blue mist is a figure of the invisible Christ, his face full of compassion as if saying "I too have suffered." So in our time of need, separated by the thin veil of human flesh, hidden from mortal eyes, but revealed to the consciousness of the inner spirit, Jesus draws near to comfort us. He too has suffered.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What accusation was put up over the Cross?

What friends were with Jesus?

How did He deal with dying criminals?

What is the deeper meaning of the last sayings on the Cross?

What prophecies were fulfilled in the manner of His death?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Saviour, King and Son. (1151)—The Cross shows us first—the Saviour who could not save himself; second, the King on his throne; third, the son beloved of the Father. Let us see that weak man hanging helpless on the cross, whose "cannot" is the impotence of omnipotence, imposed by his own loving will to save a world by the sacrifice of himself. Let us crown him our King, and let our deepest trust and our gladdest

obedience be rendered to him because he did not come down from, but "endured the cross." Let us behold with wonder, awe and endless love the Father not withholding his only Son, but "delivering him up to the death of us all."—Maclaren.

What He Did for Us. (1152)—The spot where He suffered cannot now be identified. It was outside the gates of the city. It is usually called Mount Calvary, but there is nothing to justify such a name. Golgotha, place of a skull, may signify a skull-like knoll, but more probably refers to the ghastly relics of the tragedies that might be lying about. It was probably a wide, open space in which a multitude might assemble; and it appears to have been on the side of a much-frequented thoroughfare, for there were others passing to and fro who joined in mocking the Saviour. Cicero, who was well acquainted with crucifixion, says it was the most cruel and shameful of all punishments. It was reserved for slaves and revolutionaries. The victim usually lingering two or three days with torture and intolerable thirst constantly increasing.

We gladly turn away from the awful sight, to think how by His strength of soul, his resignation and his love Jesus triumphed over the shame, the cruelty and horror of it. He converted the symbol of slavery and wickedness into a symbol for whatever is most pure and glorious in the world. He uttered seven sentences by which we can look into his mind and heart. He was never more completely himself—the absolutely unselfish worker for others.—Stalker.

The Saviour of the World. (1153)—No man knows the real meaning, the possible issue and outcome of a great deal in our lives. These blind watchers at the cross were ignorant of the real outcome of what they were doing and therefore were guiltless. God weighs, not counts our actions. It is possible to look at Christ on the Cross and see nothing. For half a day these soldiers sat, and it was only a dying Jew they saw.—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Lifting Power of the Cross (1154).

A heathen ruler, who had heard the story of the Cross and desired to know its power, was sick unto death. To one of his attendants he said, "Make a cross and lay it down in front of my door." When this was done, he said, "Take me, now, and lay me on the cross. Extend my hands and feet and let me

die." As he lay there dying he lay hold on the blood of Christ and said, "It lifts me up; it lifts me!"—Biblical Encyclopedia.

He Saved Others (1155).

The city of Marseilles in France was once afflicted with a terrible plague. The physicians could do nothing till a post mortem examination had been held to discover the nature of the mysterious disease. All agreed to this but who would be the surgeon? Suddenly Guyon, one of the most skillful among their number, arose and said: "Be it so, I devote myself to the safety of my country."

During the night a man died of the plague, the examination was made by Guyon, his notes placed in a vase of vinegar so that the disease might not be conveyed to another, then he retired to a convenient place and died twelve hours later. Was not this man a follower of that Great Physician?—New Testament Anecdotes.

Pierced Hands (1156).

"Those hands thousands their healing touches knew;
On wither'd limbs, they fell like heavenly dew;
The dead have felt them, and have lived anew.
So many fetter'd hearts thy touch hath freed,
Physician! and thy wounds unstanched must bleed."

"He Saved Others!" (1157).

Lord! and one sign from thee could rend the sky,
One word from thee and low those mockers lie;
Thou mak'st no movement, utterest no cry,
And savest us. —Biblical Encyclopedia.

Forgive (1158).

Under the blows of the executioner, under the eyes of His persecutors, Christ, including in one supreme thought—the blind instruments of his suffering and their inspirers—a thousand times more culpable, made this prayer: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Did he by this petition accomplish only an act of clemency and pity? No, he left in the hour of his death, of his absolute defeat, the witness of future victory, certain, without end. His prayer was a veritable pardon for he foresaw that day of God when all his enemies should be conquered, vanquished by love, reconciled.—C. Wagner.

"He Died for Me" (1159).

During the Civil War a farmer who was drafted, dreaded to go on account of his motherless family. The day before depart-

ure to his astonishment and great joy, a young man, his neighbor and friend came, saying, "I will go instead of you." Nobly he took another's place and was killed in the first battle. When the farmer saw his friend's name among the missing he went to the battlefield and found the body and brought it home. From the quarry on the hillside he cut a marble tablet on which he roughly carved an inscription with his own hand while the tears fell. It moves to tears all who see this tribute:

"He died for me."

The Way, Truth and the Life (1160).

Brethren, it is not the thinker who is the true king of men, as we sometimes hear it proudly said. We need one who will not only show, but be the Truth; who will not only point, but open and be the Way; who will not only communicate thought, but give, because He is the life. Not the rabbi's pulpit, nor the teacher's desk, still less the gilded chairs of earthly monarchs, least of all the tents of conquerors, are the throne of the true king. He rules from the cross.—Maclaren.

For Me (1161).

Under an Eastern sky,
Amid a rabble's cry,
A man went forth to die
For me.
Thorn-crowned His blessed head,
Blood-stained His every tread;
Cross-laden, on He sped
For me.
Pierced glow His hands and feet,
Three hours o'er Him beat
Fierce rays of noontide heat
For me.
Thus wert Thou made all mine;
Lord, make me wholly Thine;
Grant grace and strength divine
To me.
In thought, and word, and deed
Thy will to do. Oh, lead
My soul, e'en though it bleed,
To thee.

—Ex.

SERVICE XCIX (47).

His Crucifixion and Burial.

After His Death.—Matt. 27:51-56; Luke 23:47, 48; John 19:31-37.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Effects of Christ's Death.

I. On the beholders—multitude and centurion.

II. The reflections it suggests to us. (1) The best of causes may be violently opposed. (2) That the cause of Christ will ultimately triumph.—Simeon.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What was the significance of the earthquake, open graves, and rent veil of the temple?

What did the centurion and watchers say?

How did the death affect the multitudes who were watching?

Why did the Jews ask Pilate that the bodies might be removed?

Why was the body of Jesus treated differently than the others?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

"It Is Finished." (1161)—The great work of salvation was now, at last, completed; prophecy fulfilled; the Ancient Covenant at an end, the Holy of Holies had ceased to be for the great veil of the Temple and suddenly rent itself in two; as if he who had hitherto dwelt there had gone forth to lead up his eternal son to his own right hand.—Geikie.

Convicted the Crowd. (1162)—The death of Jesus inspired the spectators with wonderment and awe, especially the centurion who had command of the soldiers. He had been present at the trial and he had heard Pilate's repeated assertion of the prisoner's innocence. It all came back to him at that dread crisis. "Indeed," he exclaimed, "this man was righteous; truly he was God's son." The multitude also who thronged to Calvary through mere curiosity were deeply affected. Scared by the earthquake and stricken with awe, they took themselves off, beating their breasts. —David Smith.

The Cross the Badge of Holiness. (1163)—"Finished was His holy life; with his life, his struggle, with his struggle his

work, with his work the redemption, with the redemption the foundation of the new world." The secular historian, be he ever so skeptical, cannot fail to see in it the central point of the world's history, the boundary between ancient and modern days. From that hour holiness became the universal ideal of all who name His name, and the attainment of that ideal, the common heritage of souls in which his spirit dwells.—Farrar.

Partition Removed. (1164)—"The veil of the temple was rent in twain" when Christ died. That death, because it is a sacrifice, makes it possible that the whole fulness of the divine love should be poured upon man. That death moves our hearts, takes away our sense of guilt, draws us nearer to him; and so both by its operation—not on the love of God—but on the government of God, and by its operation on the consciousness of men, throws open the path into his very presence.—Maclaren.

Except a Grain of Wheat. (1165)—What seems failure may be the appointed way to success. Livingstone's death did more for Africa than he could have done had he completed his task. From the worn-out figure kneeling at the bedside in the hut in Ilala an electric thrill went through the civilized world which is felt today.

Success in Failure. (1166)—Dante's failure to save Florence by his services as a statesman, and his consequent banishment with the confiscation of all his property, furnished the occasion and the motive of the greater work, the "Divine Comedy."

God's Plans Invincible. (1167)—Over and over again the great of earth have demonstrated that success is wrapped up in what the world deems failure.

Columbus in chains, Galileo in prison, Abraham Lincoln assassinated, God has used all these through history and science to objectively prove that the world with all its ignorant hatred cannot defeat his plans for man's good.

Bearing our Burdens. (1168)—Every man must bear his own burden, and it is a fine thing to see any one trying to do it manfully; carrying his cross bravely, silently, patiently, and in a way which makes you hope that he has taken for his pattern the greatest of all sufferers.—Jas. Hamilton.

It is Finished. (1169)—Men's lives are incomplete only as they fail to fulfill God's plan. The flower that blooms and dies though it waste its sweetness on desert air; the tiny animal that builds its ocean home only to be followed by millions in its

wake; the cloud that disappears as it sends down refreshing showers; the sun that runs its day's course even when it sets in darkness—all have finished their work in the universe of God.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Victory in Defeat (1170).

When Samuel Rutherford was sentenced to imprisonment in the city of Aberdeen "for righteousness sake," he wrote to a friend: "The Lord is with me; I care not what man can do. I burden no man, and I want nothing. No being is better provided for than I am. My chains are over-gilded with gold. No pen, no words can express to you the loveliness of my only, only Lord Jesus."

Carrying Out God's Plan (1171).

Robert Morrison in a letter to the London Missionary Society writes: "Knowing that Jesus wills that his gospel shall be preached in all the world and that the redeemed of the Lord are to be gathered out of every kindred and tongue and people; recollecting, moreover, the command of Jesus to go into all the world to preach the gospel to every creature, I conceive it my duty, as a candidate for the holy ministry, to stand candidate for a station where laborers are most needed."

An anecdote is related of him on the day of his departure. After business matters were arranged the ship owner turned to him and said, "And so, Mr. Morrison, you really expect that you will make an impression on the idolatry of the great Chinese empire?" "No, sir," said Morrison, with more than his usual sternness. "I expect God will."

First Fruits (1172).

Captain Allen Gardiner and his six companions died by starvation on the coast of Terra del Fuego after repeated efforts to evangelize that desolate country. This led to a controversy about the utility of missions, and a fresh interest in Patagonia, which did more for the cause than the devoted pioneer could have accomplished.

When the famous John Brown raid was made in the final struggle for slave emancipation the first building seized was the depot of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at Harper's Ferry. It was in charge of a trusty negro. Upon Brown's men demanding admittance he refused, as he was charged to let no one in. He was shot down—a negro faithful to his trust being the first victim of those whose mission it was to free the African race.

SERVICE C (48).

His Crucifixion and Burial.

At the Tomb.—Mark 15:42-47; John 19:38-41.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Secret Disciple. I. Joseph's faith was strong in the Messiah's spiritual kingdom. II. He had the hope of every faithful Israelite from the time the promise was first given. III. He first confessed Christ, after His crucifixion. IV. His example evidently influenced Nicodemus.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Why had the discipleship of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus changed?

What evidence of death did Pilate demand before he granted the removal of the body of Jesus?

Was the tomb of Jesus different than others?

What precautions were taken in closing the tomb?

Who followed Jesus to the last?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Sins of the World Broke His Heart. (1174)—Jesus died literally of a broken heart. It was the eve of the great Passover Sabbath, and no corpse could be left unburied to defile the ceremonial purity of the Holy City. It was necessary, therefore, that our Lord be buried without a moment's delay for sunset was rapidly approaching. Bodies of Jewish criminals seem to have been buried in the Valley of Hinnom, amidst the unclean dust heaps of the city and the ashes of Temple sacrifices, for the guilty could not be buried with the just. But such an indignity was not to befall the Saviour. Now that Jesus was dead, breaking through all weak reserve and caution at last, Joseph of Arimathea went unto city to ask that the body of Jesus might be placed at his disposal. He would fain honor His lifeless form, if only to show his regret and shame for unworthy half-heartedness while He still lived.—Geikie.

Jesus Makes Nicodemus a Witness. (1175)—Meanwhile the force of his example had helped to waken a kindred feeling in the soul of the candid but fearful Nicodemus. However much

he had held back during the life of Jesus, now on the evening of his death, his heart was filled with a gush of compassion and remorse, and he hurried to His cross and burial with an offering of truly royal munificence. The faith which once had required the curtain of darkness, can venture at last into noonday confidence. Thanks to these two noble disciples He who died as a malefactor was buried as a King.—Farrar.

Riches of Birth and Death. (1176)—Twice was Jesus rich, in the days of his poverty. Once immediately after his birth when the wise men offered him gold, etc., and now after his ignominious death, when a rich man buries him, and a distinguished man provides spices to anoint him.—Besser.

To the Jews, the End—To Christians, the Beginning. (1177)—Death ends all controversies, and it had settled the one between Him and the Jewish authorities in their favor. He had put Himself forward as their Messiah but he had never received any important national recognition. His followers were few. His career had been short. He was in his grave. Nothing more was to be thought of him.—Stalker.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Living Torches (1178).

The Christians used by Nero for blazing torches died, but they fired the zeal of early followers, making them not only willing but anxious to die for the Master.

Blood of Martyrs Seed of Church (1179).

The Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve did not end the Huguenot faith as its instigators hoped. They were driven to other places more favorable to its extension.

Killing Don't Conquer (1180).

The whiskey element thought they were getting the victory when their tool killed Rev. Haddock, but his death but deepened the sentiment that brought prohibition and a mulct law for Iowa.

Death Does Not End All (1181).

Joan of Arc was cruelly burned to death in the market place of Rouen with eight hundred soldiers round the stake lest any

should attempt to save her. They put a false accusation on her cap, "Heretic, Relapsed, Apostate, Idolatress." This was the world's reward to one of the bravest and best lives ever lived. The English, that men might forget her, threw her ashes into the sea. There remains no relic, no portrait, cup, sword or jewel that she ever touched, yet she will never be forgotten. Near the place where she lay wounded, driven from Paris, is her statue. On every eighth of May a procession in her honor goes through the streets of Orleans, and the world today calls her good.

The Power of Example (1182).

John G. Paton, in his Leaves from Tanna, tells of a converted Tannese teacher at whom a Sacred Man or heathen priest first threw the killing stone, then sprang upon him with a club. He recovered and when I pled with him to remain he replied, "When the missionary first came to my island I desired to murder him as they now desire to kill me. Had he stayed away for such danger, I would have remained heathen. The same God that changed me to this can change these poor Tannese, —I cannot stay away."

Attacked again, this time fatally, while dying he was constantly praying for his persecutors. To him Jesus was all in all, and there were no bonds in his death.

SERVICE CI (49).

The Resurrection.

The Empty Tomb.—Mark 16: 1-7.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Deserted Sepulchre. I. What they did—(1) When they came; (2) The purpose for which they came.

II. What they said—(1) This question was natural; (2) The event showed that it was needless.

III. What they beheld—"They saw a young man," etc. (1) His designation; (2) The position he occupied; (3) The raiment he wore.

IV. What they heard—(1) The tidings announced; (2) The command they received.

V. What they felt—(1) They trembled; (2) They were amazed; (3) The effect which their terror and astonishment produced. There was speed on one hand and silence on the other.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Who was first at the tomb?

What caused anxiety among the women?

What had happened?

What did the women learn from the angel?

Why was the command to tell his disciples, and Peter, given?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Faithful Women. (1183)—For three days after the burial of their dead, the Jews were wont to visit the sepulchre to see if haply the soul had returned to its tenement of clay. None of the Eleven thought of visiting the sepulchre. They durst not. But there was one heart in which love conquered fear. In her home at Bethany, Mary Magdalene remained inactive, until the Sabbath was past; and then, too eager to wait for daylight, and glad perhaps of the covert of the darkness, she repaired to the garden, accompanied by other women.—David Smith.

Angels at Cradle and at Tomb. (1184)—We heard much of a herald angel of the Lord in the story of the Nativity. Now he appears again as a humble servitor, in token that the highest

beings gazed on that empty grave with reverent adoration. They come to minister by act and word to the weeping women's faith and joy. Their appearance paralyzes the guards, who would have kept the Marys from the grave. They roll away the great stone, which women's hands could not have moved from its grooves. They speak tender words to them. There by the empty tomb, the strong heavenly and the weak earthly lovers of the King meet together and clasp hands of help, the first fruits of the standing order henceforth.—Maclaren.

History. (1185)—Nothing in human history is better authenticated than the laden cross, the empty tomb. If we can believe the one we can not deny the other. "One Jesus who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." The uproar in Jerusalem testified to the death of the Christ; the testimony of suffering men and women, the sacrifice of all things dear to human hearts, "for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus," left nothing to be desired in the way of testimony to his resurrection.

A Thought for Critics. (1186)—One of the foundation stones of the Christian Church is the empty grave. The body was gone. Where? Did his enemies know? If they did they could easily have shattered the resurrection story and made a laughing stock of these disciples as dreamers.

When Peter and John, after Pentecost, had healed the lame man and were put in prison for it, were brought before the council they said, "Be it known unto you that Jesus whom ye crucified, whom God hath raised from the dead, he hath made this man whole." Why didn't these Sadducees put these preachers to confusion by pointing to a sealed and occupied grave. They couldn't. "He is not here."—MacMullen.

Empty Tomb. (1187)—To the door of past sins and sorrows with all their horrors of blackness, on this fair Easter morning, comes God's Angel of Mercy, saying in accents tender to women who sit silently weeping, "Daughters of Earth, Arise! the tomb of thy griefs is empty. Henceforth no grave clothes can bind thy soul in the terrors of death. He is not here but is risen! Rise, give him gracious welcome, so shall thy joy be full."

ILLUSTRATIONS.

God Lives (1188).

Frederick Douglass was at one time addressing an audience and recounted all the things which had happened as a death-

blow to his hopes for his people. After the meeting was over one of the old colored mammies said, "Is God dead, Frederick?"

Many a man like the disciples has given up under apparent defeat, only to be thrilled later by the message "He goeth before you." God had brought victory out of man's utter defeat.

Love for Her Dead (1189).

The procession that had come flower-laden on Decoration Day were about to leave the cemetery. At the gate a child was found crying bitterly. "What's the matter, little girl?" one asked. "You put no flowers on my papa's grave." And though he wasn't a soldier, not even one who had commanded the respect of men, yet the father's grave was covered with flowers because of the faithful, loving remembrance of his child.

Resurrection Hope (1190).

An unbeliever has said with a sneer, "It is upon an empty tomb that the Christian Church is founded." He might have said more on that point had he considered it longer, for it was on the discovery of the fact that the tomb was empty that Mary's trembling love sprang into triumphant faith.

A French infidel was determined to uproot Christianity and found a system of his own that should supersede it. His efforts proved a disappointment. He came to Talleyrand and asked his advice. "O," said Talleyrand, "go and be crucified, and then raise yourself from the grave the third day."

The heathen sorrowed without hope. A shattered pillar, a ship gone to pieces, a race lost, a harp lying on the ground with snapped strings, were the utterances of their grief. That the column was transferred to another building, that the bud was not crushed but transplanted to a kindlier soil, that the harp was not broken but handed to a truer minstrel—these things had no place in their dreams.—H. Bonar.

SERVICE CII (50).

The Resurrection.

They have taken away my Lord.—John 20: 11-18.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Seeking the Lord. I. We should seek a living Christ, not one dead and far away.

II. If we seek earnestly, like Mary we shall find the living Saviour.

III. We shall know him when he speaks to us.

IV. We shall carry his message to others.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What tidings did Mary Magdalene bring to Peter and John?

What did Mary discover after they had gone home?

How did Jesus make himself known to Mary?

What did Mary's "Rabboni!" mean?

On what errand did Jesus send her?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

With Those Who Love Him. (1191)—Knowing the retreat of Peter and John, Mary ran thither and told them her discovery and her surmise. They hurried to the sepulchre. It was indeed empty. Peter with characteristic impetuosity leaped down and examined the grave. John descended and the wondrous truth dawned upon him. The two disciples returned home, leaving Mary weeping by the entrance. Presently she peered into the grave. Two angels were there. "Woman," they said, "Why art thou weeping?" "They have taken away my Lord," she sobbed, "and I know not where they have laid him." Did some look or gesture of the angels apprise her that one had entered behind her? She looked around and beheld one standing there but she did not recognize him, supposing it was the gardener. "Mary!" he said, and that was enough. "Rabboni!" she cried. "Love," says St. Bernard, "knows no reverence," and flinging herself at his feet, she would have embraced them and covered them with kisses, for she thought their former intercourse would straightway be resumed. "Cling not to me," he said, "for I have not yet ascended unto the Father; but go unto the brethren and tell them."—David Smith.

News of Risen Saviour Should Move Lips and Feet. (1192)

—No wonder that, swiftly, new duty which was privilege, followed on the new, glad knowledge. It was emphatically "a day of good tidings," and they could not hold their peace. A brief glance, enough for certitude and joy, as permitted; and then, with urgent haste, the women are sent to be apostles to the Apostles. The possession of the news of a risen Saviour binds the possessors to be its preachers. Where it is received in any power, it will impel to utterance. He who can keep silence has never felt, as he ought, the worth of the word, now realized the reason why he has seen the Cross or the empty grave.

Note the deep significance of the name Jesus here. The angel spoke of "the Lord," but all the rest of the chapter speaks of Jesus. The joy and hope that flow from the Resurrection depend on the fact of his humanity. He comes out of the grave the same brother of our mortal flesh as before. All through the Resurrection narrative of the forty days, the same emphasis attaches to the name, which culminates in the angel's assurance at the Ascension that "this same Jesus, in his true humanity, who has gone up on high, our forerunner, shall come again our brother and our judge."—Maclaren.

God Lives and Reigns. (1193)—When the news was received in New York City of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, men were frantic with despair, but James A. Garfield quieted the tumult by saying, "God reigns; and the government at Washington still lives."

"They Have Taken My Lord Away" (1194).

To his empty tomb the woman
  Steals forth at the dawn of day,
And the cry is wrung from her breaking heart,
  "They have taken my Lord away."
In sorrow she turns, but—"Mary"—
  Uplifting her drooping head,
At the spoken word of her living Lord
  She knows that Death is dead.

In the dawn of faith I seek him
  'Mid the learned of earth, but they,
With subtle logic and sophist's guile
  Have taken my Lord away.
Then, stooping to lift a brother
  O'erburdened with toil and strife,

In the glowing morn of hope newborn
I walk with the Lord of Life.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Christianity the Crown of Woman (1195).

In lands and ages without the Gospel she is treated as a nuisance. In Egypt she was doomed to the labors of the field, denied music, and could not wear shoes. In Greenland, while the men hunt and lounge, the women build the houses, tan the skins of animals, and row the boat, save when a storm comes up and the men take the oars to save themselves. Then if a gun misses fire it is charged to a sorceress and a woman must be slain. In China daughters are thrown into the stream to die, and women hitched to the plow and driven like oxen across the field. Among the Kafirs the price of a wife is an ox or two cows. At the East today if a man finds it necessary to speak of his wife or daughter he always begins with an apology.—Talmage.

Where Christ Has Not Risen (1196).

She was a Hindu woman, and her husband was ill. The doctor said that he could not live for more than half an hour. His wife, writes Rev. Herbert Halliwell, arrayed herself in costly clothing, painted her forehead with vermillion and her feet with lac dye, as did the suttees of old, and offered a prayer to the domestic idol. Then she poured some of the Ganges water into the mouth of the unconscious husband, and leaving him, drenched her clothing with kerosene oil, and set fire to it.

It was over in a second or two, and no one could prevent it. The astounding thing is that Hindus are now coming to worship the place. Superstition dies hard.

New light has been thrown upon the woman's motive by a letter written on a crumpled piece of white paper which was found in her room after her death. It contains this message:

"Send me with my husband to the burning ghat.

"I am helpless.

"I shall not be able to bear widowhood.

"If I am saved I shall go mad."

The motive of Saibalinee Dassi was not religious. She was not a fanatic. She was simply a woman who, as Mr. Halliwell says, had not the courage to bear the shame and burden of Hindu widowhood.

Small wonder! She knew what that is. She had seen young women with shaven heads and soiled white garments,

household drudges, objects of scorn, or worse—half-starved tools of licentious men—Hindu widows. She shrank back from this abyss. Death, she thought, was better. She died.

This occurrence throws a flashlight upon the horror of India's moral darkness. It demonstrates the need of Christ.—C. E. World.

Christ's Eye Is Upon Us (1197).

A Highland chief of the noble house of Macgregor fell wounded by two balls at the battle of Preston Pass. Seeing their chief fall, the clan wavered and gave the enemy advantage. The old chieftain, beholding the effect of the disaster, raised himself up on his elbow, while the blood gushed in streams from his wounds, and cried aloud, "I am not dead, my children. I am looking at you to see you do your duty." This rallied their sinking courage.

Christ Needs Prompt, Practical, Active Servants (1198).

To do anything in this world worth doing we must not stand back shivering and thinking of the cold and danger, but jump in and scramble through as well as we can. It will not do to be perpetually calculating risks. It did very well before the flood, when a man could consult his friends upon an intended enterprise for one hundred and fifty years, and then live to see its success. But at present a man waits and doubts and consults his particular friends, till one day he finds he is sixty years of age, and that he has lost so much time in consulting his friends he has no more time to follow their advice.—Sydney Smith.

The human race is divided into two classes—those who go ahead and do something, and those who sit still and inquire, "Why wasn't it done the other way?"—O. W. Holmes.

You can commit no greater folly than to sit by the roadside until some one comes along and invites you to ride with him to wealth or influence.—John B. Gough.

Seeking Christ Today (1200).

Not long ago there was a researcher of art in Italy who, reading in some book that there was a portrait of Dante painted by Giotto, was led to suspect that he had found where it had been placed. There was an apartment used as an outhouse for the storage of wood, hay, and the like. He obtained permission to enter it, cleared out the rubbish, experimented upon the white-washed wall, and detected signs of the wished-for portrait. He tried on till the stern face of the Tuscan poet stood out in bold relief. So should we seek Christ.

SERVICE CIII (51).

The Resurrection.

The Walk to Emmaus.—Luke 24: 13-35.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The Walk with Disciples. I. When they are troubled or need him he draws near.

II. If our conversation be such that he can, he loves to reveal God's thoughts and plans to us.

III. Our hearts burn as we apprehend his truth and we get a clearer realization of what he is himself.

IV. Closer fellowship and communion follow and we "constrain him to abide with us."

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Who were these two men?

What were they discussing by the way?

How did Jesus join their conversation?

What light did he throw on their difficulties?

Through what means did they recognize him?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Present When We Talk of Him. (1201)—While Cleopas and his friend journeyed toward Emmaus, discussing recent events in Jerusalem, so dear to their hearts, Jesus himself drew near and took part in the conversation. Citing prophecy, he opens their minds to the truth of the resurrection. Charmed with the power of interpretation possessed by this gracious stranger, they constrain him when they reach their destination to abide with them. Then in the breaking of bread he is revealed. When we talk of him by the way there comes a clearer vision of his truth. When we constrain him to abide with us, fellowship and communion follow, manifested to our consciousness in a real sense of his personal presence with us, as he breaks the bread of life with us through his spirit in the Word day by day.

The Universal Christ. (1202)—The Lord Christ comes out of the grave in which he lay for every man, and brings to each man's door, in a dialect intelligible to the man himself, the satisfaction of the single soul's aspirations and ideals, as well as of the national desires. His gifts and greetings are universal, meant for us all and adapted for us each.—Maclaren.

Comes When Wanted. (1203)—The Master allowed himself to be constrained. He went in to be their guest. He sat down with them to the frugal board. Now he was no longer stranger. He was the Master. No one questioned as he took the bread and spoke the words of blessing. But that moment it was, as if an unfelt hand had been taken from their eyelids, and they knew him and he vanished from their view—for that which he had come to do had been done. One thing forced itself ever anew upon them, that even while their eyes had yet been holden, their hearts had burned within them while he spake and opened to them the Scriptures. They had learned to the full the Resurrection lesson, that it needed not his bodily presence if he only opened up the Scripture concerning himself.—Edersheim.

At Home Where He Is Loved. (1204)—We see in this appearance, as in others, something very characteristic of our Lord's habits and ways during his lifetime. He was always carrying on his work as quietly as possible. We may see how easily still, in that risen life, he enters into communication with men; how little difficulty he has in joining any company with whom he wishes to be.

This appearance of Christ is like a message of fraternity and divine regard, especially to plain, simple, ordinary men, to what we may call common men, who wear no distinction and possess no advantage whatever over their fellows. No one knows anything about them. In all probability there was not much to know, except that they were disciples, that they loved him.—Raleigh.

He Lives Where Men Love Him. (1205)—The world cannot bury Christ. The earth is not deep enough for his tomb, the clouds are not wide enough for his winding-sheet; he ascends into the heavens, but the heavens cannot contain him. "He still lives—in the church which burns unconsumed with his love; in the truth that reflects his image; in the hearts which burn as he talks with them by the way.—Edward Thomson.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Christian Conversation (1206).

What is in the well will come up in the bucket. The metal of the bell will be known by its sound. If there be a man who is about to found a new colony in Australia, and has got the idea well into his head, you get into a railway carriage with him, and though the talk begins about the weather and the crops,

before five minutes he will bring you around to Australia. As certainly as religion has ever entered into a man's heart he will not allow you to be long with him before bringing you round to it.—Spurgeon.

Would you not expect to hear of engagements and victories from a soldier, or of the state of trade from a merchant? Why, then, should not the agents of the court of heaven treat of heavenly things? Why should they be one thing when they bow the knee and a different one when they talk in the parlor?—Hervey.

Christian Fellowship (1207).

As bells answer bells and strike with sweet collision in the air, so heart answers heart and joy answers joy as we sacredly commune together.

The Christian Czar Alexander I said he could understand a Christian in five minutes; whether monarch or peasant his heart was with him and he could profit from his experience.—Miss Henderson.

Security of the Word (1208).

A traveler was overtaken by a storm at nightfall in the Kentucky mountains. He asked for shelter at a cabin by the roadside. There were two men, very rough and to his fancy sinister looking. After he retired he heard them talking in low tones, and nervously wondered if they were going to rob him. Stealing softly to the head of the ladder which led to the loft where he lay, he listened. Then he heard the words of God's book, and the old man's voice in prayer. He smiled at his fears and went back to sleep in peace and safety till daylight.

Purity Where Christ Dwells (1209).

Two men were walking down street when they were joined by a third. After the usual greetings, one of them said, "A was just telling me a good story; I'm going to ask him to finish it." "I'll do that later," replied his companion "B never talks about those things." His presence brought a rebuke and a change to purer thought.

A Benediction (1210).

Get into sympathy with Jesus. Seek his presence, seek his help. And walking through the world in his company, you will be as balm in bleakest weather, a benediction in the wildest scene.—James Hamilton.

Zeal (1211).

It is only through a burning zeal for the salvation of the lost—a zeal glowing in the heart, and flashing out in the look and action and utterance—that the confidence of unbelief can be overcome, and the heedless travelers of the broad way won to the path of life and happiness.—The Christian at Work.

It is a coal from God's altar must kindle our fire; and without fire, true fire, no acceptable sacrifice.—William Penn.

The Burning Heart (1212).

Dr. John Robertson tells of a Scotch village where, years ago, all the hearthfires had gone out. It was before the days of matches. The only way to rekindle the fires was to find some hearth where the fire was yet aglow. Their search was fruitless until at last they found a flaming hearth away up on the hill. One by one they came to this hearth and lighted their peat, put it carefully in the pan, shielding it from the wind, and the fires were soon burning again throughout the community.

Are the fires getting low in your heart? Has the chill of worldliness settled down upon you? God has plenty of fire on the hill. Climb up into his presence through the path of surrender, and he will take the live coal from the altar and lay it upon your heart and upon your lips. This is the fulness of the Holy Ghost. This is the passion for souls.

Abide With Us (1213).

In fiery chariots of the west ascending,
The day hath passed in triumph, Lord, to Thee!
Its fallen mantle glows with twilight blending
On the far shadowy spaces of the sea.
It is toward evening. Oft at noontide roaming
Our hearts have met with Thee in sweet accord;
Now in the peace and leisure of the gloaming,
Abide with us, O Lord!
It is toward evening. Soon from out the shadows
A deeper shadow on our brows must fall;
So soon across the dim familiar meadows
The hour will come when we must leave them all.
Ah, leave us not with Death alone to wander,
Let Thine own hand unloose the silver cord;
Though night fall here, until the day dawn yonder,
Abide with us, O Lord!

—Pittsburg Christian Advocate.

SERVICE CIV (52).

The Resurrection.

Proof to Believers.—Luke 24: 36-43.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

The King of Peace among His Troubled Subjects.—How faith in the Saviour gives peace amidst.

I. The doubts of unbelief.
II. The disquietudes of the conscience.
III. The sorrows of life.
IV. The fear for the future.
V. The prospect of death.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

Why did the disciples think Jesus was a spirit?
What was the effect of his appearance among them?
What evidences did Jesus use to prove his reality?
Why was the expression "flesh and bones" used?
Was there any change in his intercourse with them?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Son of God and Saviour. (1214)—Though the death of Jesus had shaken their belief in his messiahship, the disciples had by no means lost their faith in him as one sent from God. The intellectual difficulty springing from the shattering of an erroneous dogma seems to them to have wrecked their faith, but to Jesus himself their hearts still cling. How often this is true in modern times. Suffering and death were a necessity of his mission. They counted success, not defeat and death, the evidence of messiahship. Only when they were convinced that he had actually died and risen again, could they believe that this was part of the career of the Messiah.—Burton and Matthews.

Christ More to Us Than Disciples. (1215)—As proof of Messiahship, as the pattern and prophecy of immortality, and as the symbol of the better life which is accessible for us, here and now—the Resurrection of Jesus Christ stands for us even more truly than for the thankful men who looked upon him in the upper chamber, as the source of peace and of joy.—Maclaren.

The Apostles Graduated. (1216)—With the scattering of the Eleven in Gethsemane on the night of Christ's betrayal, the

Apostolic College was temporarily broken up. They continued, indeed, still to meet together as individual disciples, but the bond of the Apostolate was for the moment dissolved. The Apostolic circle was to be reformed, their commission renewed and enlarged in Galilee, not by its lake where seven only seem to have been present, but on the mountain where he had directed them to meet him. There he would call them again, give fullest directions and bestow new and amplest powers. His appearances in Jerusalem were intended to prepare them for this.—Edersheim.

Power from Him. (1217).—Once more, for the fifth time, on that memorable Easter day, Jesus manifested himself to his disciples. Ten of them were sitting together, with doors closed for fear of the Jews. As they exchanged and discussed their happy intelligence, Jesus himself stood in their midst. The unwonted aspect of that glorified body—the awful significance of the fact that he had risen from the dead—scared and frightened them. The presence of their Lord was indeed corporeal, but it was changed. While joy, amazement, incredulity, were all struggling in their hearts, yet further to assure them, he ate in their presence. Once more he said, "Peace be unto you. As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." Breathing on them, he said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them: whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."—Farrar.

Power to Forgive Sins. (1218)—The power of forgiving sins is divinely bestowed upon the disciples of Jesus Christ in their corporate capacity. Jesus called upon the offended individual to forgive the offender upon receiving individual confession. Nowhere in Scripture is forgiveness promised apart from confession and restitution.—Parker.

Christ the Word of Eternal Life (1219)—When we view the appearance of Jesus to his disciples after his death in the light of all that led up to the Cross we see the manifestation as inevitable. Peter struck the center of the truth when he declared it to be impossible for his Lord to be held by death. These words of Peter follow naturally from those other words of his that the disciples knew no one but Christ to whom to turn, that Christ had the words of Eternal Life. Christ himself was the word of Eternal Life.

The fullness of his life nowhere showed more clearly than

in the Cross. Christ's grasp on himself, on the truth, on the Father, comes to climax and focus in the Cross.

If we believe in the life in Christ we can easily believe in the manifestation of the eternal vigor of that life to the disciples. —Francis J. McConnell, D. D.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Resurrection a Pardon for Sinners (1220).

When the Jewish rulers who had sworn away the life of Jesus heard first of his resurrection they said to the witnesses, "Ye intend to bring this man's blood upon us." The resurrection of Jesus to them had no other meaning than vengeance. They reasoned, "If he whom we slew is exalted, woe unto us." But to these very men the apostles preached pardon. They proclaimed that Jesus is exalted for the purpose of showing mercy to his murderers. Water is exalted into the heavens in order that it may give rain upon the earth—it is exalted to give. Now that Christ is exalted and his enemies are in his power, instead of taking vengeance he gives remission of sins.—J. M. Bingham.

The Proof of Immortality (1221).

The resurrection of Jesus is the proof of immortal life beyond the grave; that death does not end all, but the soul lives after the body dies.

"A fox once came upon a cave, into which he saw many foxes had entered, the sand being full of footprints. He was about to pass in when his cunning eye detected that all the footprints pointed one way. All were turned inwards, and there were none leading out of the cave. We have come to a great cave—the grave—and its entrance is marked by many footprints. All lead in and none out. But Christ has set his feet the other way; and now, if we go into this cave, we shall follow him out again."—London Sunday-School Chronicle.

Cape of Good Hope (1222).

"There was once a famous cape reputed to be the fatal barrier to the navigation of the ocean. Of all those whom the winds or the currents had drawn into its waters it was said that none had reappeared. A bold navigator determined to surmount the obstacles. He opened the route to the East Indies, acquired for his country the riches of the world, and changed the Cape of Storms into the Cape of Good Hope. So Christ has proved himself death's conqueror and made the grave to be the gate to life for us."—Christian Age.

SERVICE CV (53).

The Resurrection.

Proof for a Doubter.—John 20: 24-29.

HOMILETIC HINTS.

Proof for Doubters. I. Mary Magdalene's Doubt. 'They have taken away"—Jesus appears and speaks.

II. Peter and John's Doubt—Empty tomb—grave clothes—appearance in the upper room.

III. Thomas' Doubts—met by challenge of Jesus.

IV. The Beatitute for Believers.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS.

What other knowledge have we of Thomas?

How did Jesus deal with a doubter?

Did Thomas still insist on evidence?

What was the object in the writing of the gospel of John?

Why was the Beatitude of Faith given at this time?

THOUGHTS ON THE THEME.

Slow to Believe Even Now. (1224)—The following Sunday the disciples met again in their room. Once more Jesus appeared in their midst and greeted them. It was for the doubter's sake he had come, like the shepherd seeking his one lost sheep. "Reach thy finger here," he said, "and see my hands, and reach thy hand, and put it into my side; and prove not unbelieving but believing." "My Lord and my God!" cried Thomas, leaping from the depths of despair to the very summit of faith. Jesus answered gently: "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed." Though addressed to one, it was a reproach to all the apostles, since they had all been slow to believe the Scripture's testimony and the Lord's reiterated declaration that he would rise from the dead on the third day. And it has a meaning for all time. "When," observes St. Chrysostom, "one says now: 'Would that I had been in those days and seen Christ working wonders!' let him consider that blessed are they that saw not and believed."—David Smith.

Proof of Resurrection. (1225)—Once more—and it is again specially marked: "the doors being shut" the Risen Saviour appeared in the midst of the disciples with the well-known saluta-

tion. He now offered to Thomas the demanded evidence; but it was no longer either needed or sought. With a full rush of feeling he yielded himself to the blessed conviction, which, once formed must have immediately passed into act of adoration: "My Lord and my God!" The fullest confession made, which truly embraced the whole outcome of the new conviction concerning the reality of Christ's resurrection.—Edersheim.

Every Man Should Know. (1226)—No fact in the history of the world stands on such firm evidence as the resurrection of Jesus Christ. No age of the world ever needed to believe it more than this one does. It becomes us all to grasp it for ourselves with an iron tenacity of hold, and to echo, in the face of the materialisms and know-nothing philosophy of this day, the old ringing confession, "Now is Christ risen from the dead!"—Maclaren.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Belief in the Resurrection (1227).

A poor ragpicker takes a stick in his hand and goes into the dirty gutters of the streets of the city and picks up little bits of rags and paper. These he puts into his dirty bag. But they are washed and made over, and come out the pure white sheet of paper, beautiful enough for a queen to write upon. Who can doubt that God can take these poor bodies and out of them raise up a new and better body? Out of the very darkness and dust of the grave he can make something that will be brighter than the sun forever.—Todd.

Rent from the ignoble shell, the pearl is gone to deck the crown of the prince of peace; buried beneath the sod, the seed is preparing to bloom in the king's garden. So, with Beattie we can sing,

"The spring shall yet visit the moldering urn,
The day shall yet dawn on the night of the grave."—Spurgeon.

We can never forget a long corridor in the Vatican Museum, exhibiting on the one side epitaphs of departed heathens, and on the other mementoes of departed Christians. Opposite to lions leaping on horses, emblems of destruction, are charming sculptures of the Good Shepherd bearing home the lost lamb, with the epitaph, "Alexander is not dead, but lives above the stars."—Stoughton.

Trust (1228).

"It is strange we trust each other,
And only doubt our Lord.
We take the word of mortals,
And yet distrust his word;
But oh, what a light and glory
Would shine o'er all our days,
If we always would remember
God means just what he says."

—A. B. Simpson.

Doubt in the Schools (1229).

"I have studied at Barcelona, at Salamanca, at Alcala, at Paris; what have I learned? The language of doubt; but in me there was no harbor for doubt. Jesus came, and my trust in God has grown by the doubts of men."—Ignatius Loyola.

The Final Proof (1229a).

How do I know he is Jesus, the Lord?
I was leprous, and foul, and mean;
I fell at his feet, and he lifted me up,
Saying, "I will; be clean!"

—Robert J. Burdette.

Behold the Man! (1230).

As we look upon the Son of God, betrayed, forsaken, denied; as we "behold the man" whom Pilate exhibits and marvel at the silence of divinity, the patient endurance and kingly humility; as we hear his triumphant cry on the cross, "It is finished;" as we at last, after gazing in the empty tomb, find him in the garden, with worshiping Mary, we cry, "Rabboni! Master!" with doubting Thomas we exclaim, "My Lord and my God!" With repentant Peter, we humbly answer the Master's question, "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."

EIGHT LESSONS ON PERSONAL WORK.

(Suitable for Pastor's Class for Young Converts.)

F. A. Wilson.

PERSONAL WORK.

LESSON I.

I. What is it? To lead men into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. To make the indifferent—different. I stood on the corner of Monroe and Dearborn Streets in Chicago waiting for a street car. I heard some one calling, but did not heed. I heard the cry again, yet did not turn. Suddenly I was seized by the arm and dragged from under the heads of a team of horses that in another moment would have trampled me to death. One woman saw the danger and risked her life even to warn me—that was personal work. The other day the cry of "fire" was heard. Promptly the fire department responded in quick, effective, trained service.

Every follower of the Master should be a personal worker, who can instantly meet the cry of any soul in need. Again, Col. Hadley said, "Getting saved was the easy part; the difficulty was to keep saved."

Personal work is not only leading men to Christ but it is also reclaiming backsliders, strengthening young converts by leading out along the lines of assurance, Bible study, prayer and service. It is not to get them to go to church, preaching convicts of sin, is general, not personal. It is not to get them to read the Bible, say prayers, or join a church; it is not to educate, elevate or get them to be good, but it is to get them to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Master and to come into a life of fuller fellowship with him. Doubtless you are familiar with the old poem telling of the shipwreck and how the pastor took a trumpet and called to a man whom they could not save, "Look to Jesus. Can you hear?" And the answer came back over the waves in the singing of "Jesus, Lover of My Soul." It is leading men and women to Jesus.

When we fully realize who and what Jesus Christ is to the sinner and the condition of those without God and without hope in the world, there will be no lack of eagerness on our part, to warn, entreat, use forcible measures if need be to save a soul from death. That we may know our deficiencies in order to

strengthen, let us look over the requirements for personal workers.

I. **We need to know God.** 2 Jno. 1:1-3; Acts 19:17. Life can only impart life. Acquaintance is necessary in order to introduce others.

I. **A knowledge of God's Work.** 2 Pet. 1:16-21. (a) Implicit faith in its truth. 1 Pet. 1:25; Titus 1:1, 3, 9. (b) Rightly dividing the Word. 2 Tim. 2:15-17; Rom. 2:21.

III. **The Power of the Holy Spirit.** Acts 1:8; Luke 11:13. It is his work to convict of sin and reveal Christ. We cannot do his work.

IV. **To realize the spiritual condition of the person dealt with—How?** By knowing the Word of God. Heb. 4:12. By personal testimony of God's revelation to his servants. I Cor. 14:24-25. By Holy Spirit—spiritually discerned. I Cor. 4:10-16. By our own hearts. Prov. 23:7. Concrete methods current topics—a sermon, tracts, books, a Sunday School lesson. It is the Bible way Jesus at the well, Philip and the Eunuch, Paul and the Romans. A personal transaction, acting as the connecting link between Jesus and others.

V. **Willingness and readiness for service.** To all men. I Cor. 9:19, 22; at all times, Rom. 1:14, 15; and in all places, Acts 1:8.

VI.

Boldness,	**faith,**	**humility,**	**tact.**
Acts 9:22	Acts 3:16	Psa. 10:17	I Cor. 9:22
Jno. 7:26	Mark 9:23	Isa. 66:2	
Eph. 6:19, 20	Heb. 11:6	Isa. 57:15	
Heb. 4:16		2 Cor. 3:5	

Questions for self examination of those who would do personal work:

What can you do? What can Christ do? What can the Holy Spirit do? Have you tried to work? Have you tried prayer? Have you asked for the Holy Spirit? Do you realize your own need? Have you asked to be shown? Are there any hindrances? Are you willing to lay them aside? Are you ready for service? What are you working for and studying for? To know more—to be more yourself, or that you may serve God and glorify him by being more yourself?

Have the class answer these—prepare a definition of their own for personal work, and give instances found in the Bible.

CONDITION OF THE UNSAVED.

LESSON II.

I. **Eternal condition.** Existence does not cease at death. Jno. 5:28, 29. Luke 16:25, 26. Heb. 9:27.

1. The unbelieving. (a) In Jesus Christ. Jno. 3:18; Jno. 3:36. (b) In his word. Jno. 8:43-45. II Thess. 2:10-12.

2. Sinners—Those who have disobeyed the laws of God. Rom. 2:5, 6, 8, 9; Jno. 8:34; Rom. 6:16; Isa. 57:20, 21. 2 Thess. 1:7, 8, 9.

3. The unrighteous—Those who know but wilfully do not live right, the Gospel-hardened, hypocrites, backsliders. 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 14:10-11; Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:10. Rev. 21:8.

II. **Present Condition.** Many laugh at future, and willing to risk it. When they look on life, however, it is easy to realize "Wages of sin is death." "God is not mocked." But they say, "I'm not very bad." They need conviction of sin. 1 Jno. 1:8; Matt. 22:37-39. No man has ever kept the law, can ever keep it of himself. Jesus has kept, can and will keep it for all who will let him.. Rom. 3:22, 23; Isa. 53; Rom. 3:10; Gal. 3:10; Jer. 17:9; Eccles. 7:20. How shall we as Christians meet these conditions. Ezek. 33.

How many have we warned this day—week—month—year?

Let the class review or get their own scripture references until a clear conception of the lost condition of unsaved souls is gained. Especially emphasize—under condemnation, cut off from God—in darkness—not realizing their own condition. Read also Psalm I and Jude for a description of the ungodly. Bring in a report each week of personal work done.

The class may have note-books and take the references as given by the pastor. The most helpful way has proven to have as many as possible give their references with the thought brought to them.

PLAN OF REDEMPTION.

LESSON III.

I. **Lost condition of men.** Have not kept law, Gal. 3:10-13, under wrath of God, 2 Thess. 1:8, 9, servants of sin, Jno. 8:34, cannot keep law, Matt. 22:37-39. It must be kept, a holy God will demand a perfect obedience. But our God is a God of love.

He would not demand anything without providing a way. I Jno. 4:10; 1 Jno. 3:16; Rom. 5:6; Jno. 3:16; Rom. 5:8. Believe in Jesus—what is it that is to be believed? The gospel. What is the gospel? 1 Cor. 15:1-4; Ephesians, chapter 2, shows what Jesus has been and is to the believer.

II. **What Christ is to us as the Son of God.**

1. **Our Mediator.** Job's daysman. Job 9:33. He felt the need of a go-between. Isa. 1:18; Heb. 2:17; Heb. 9:11-16; Heb. 10; Heb. 12:24; 1 Tim. 2:5; Col. 1:19-20; Eph. 2:14-18.

2. **Our Substitute.** A mediator would have to offer a substitute to suffer the penalty of broken law in order to meet the demands of God's perfect justice. Christ of his own free will offered himself as a sacrifice for sin. Jer. 23:6; Isa. 53:5, 8, 10-12; Rom. 3:23; Eph. 5:2; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 Pet. 3:18; Jno. 1:29; Heb. 9:22, 26, 28; 1 Jno. 4:10; 1 Cor. 5:7; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Jno. 2:2.

3. **Our Redeemer.** We are servants of sin. Jno. 8:34. Sold under sin we must be bought—redeemed from sin and power of Satan. Christ bought us with his blood. Acts 20:27; 1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Cor. 7:23; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14. Purchased by Christ we shall be free. Rom. 8:2; Jno. 8:36; 1 Cor. 7:22. To secure eternal life for us. Rom. 6:22, 23. We are his inheritance to improve us. Eph. 1:14; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19; Matt. 20:28; Rev. 5:8-12; Gal. 3:10, 13; Gal. 4:4, 5; Titus 2:14; 1 Tim. 2:6; Acts 20:28; Heb. 9:15; Isa. 44:22.

4. **Our Keeper.** After mediation, reconciliation being made by paying the penalty for past sin and eternal life now purchased for us, there is yet the law to be kept. Having been saved we need to be kept saved day by day. We cannot keep the law. Christ must and will keep it for us. "Christ in you the hope of glory." 1 Jno. 1:7; 1 Jno. 2:1-2; Rev. 7:13-17; Gal. 1:4; Jude 24:25; Heb. 2:14, 15, 18; 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22; 2 Thess. 5:24; Phil. 4:19; Phil. 1:6; Phil. 3:20, 21; Phil. 4:13; Eph. 1:13, 14; Eph. 3:20; Heb. 12:1, 2; 1 Pet. 2:25; Matt. 11:28-30.

Give the headings to the class and let them prepare their own references, reading them with their key thought at the meeting.

PLAN OF REDEMPTION.

LESSON IV.

I. **What Christ is to us as the Son of Man.** John 19. Behold the Man, Behold your King, Behold your Saviour.

1. **Our Prophet.** Heb. 1:1, 2; Matt. 13:57; Matt. 24 and 25; Matt. 12:38-42; Luke 7:16; Jno. 4:19; Luke 24:19; Jno. 9:17.

2. **Our Priest.** Heb. 2:17; Heb. 3d, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th chapters.

3. **Our King.** Psa. 24; Acts 17:7; Luke 19:38; Luke 23:2; Jno. 12:15; Luke 1:32, 33; I Tim. 1:17; I Tim. 6:14, 15; Rev. 19:16.

4. **Our Saviour.** Matt. 1:21; Luke 19:10; Isa. 43:11; Luke 9:56; Jno. 12:47; Heb. 7:25; I Tim. 1:15; I Jno. 4:14; Jer. 17:14; Jno. 10:7; Acts 16:31; Jno. 4:42.

5. **Our Master.** Matt. 23:8-10; Jno. 11:28; Jno. 13:13; Eph. 6:9; Col. 4:1; Matt. 8:19; Matt. 22:16.

6. **Our Servant.** Phil. 2:7; Jno. 13:4-16; Luke 22:27; Matt. 20:28.

7. **Our Friend.** Jno. 15:13-15; Prov. 18:24; Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:34.

8. **Our Brother.** Matt. 12:50; Mark 3:35; Heb. 2:11.

9. **Our Example.** Jno. 3:15; I Pet. 2:21.

All needs of the sinner, all hindrances in the life of the follower, all excuses of the backslider are met every one by what we have in and through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Have the class study and outline John 19.

Prepare references under each heading.

Review till scripture references can be given for each topic.

ASSURANCE.

LESSON V.

How may we know we are Christians? Give the unconverted the Gospel of John to read. See Jno. 20:31; the converted the first epistle of John—I Jno. 5:13. It is a "Know so" letter; mark the word **"know"** throughout the book. I Pet. 15.

I. **We have met God's conditions.** Believe, Jno. 3:16; receive, Jno. 1:12; come, John 6:37; confess, Matt. 10:32; follow, Matt. 16:24; Titus 1:2.

II. **God's Word says so.** If we have done our part, he does his; he tells us so. Jno. 5:24; I Jno. 5:13.

III. **Testimony of the life itself.** You know whether you are alive or not. Even a baby manifests its life, has a consciousness that it is, and other people have also. We are new creatures. You cannot hide the change, life will express itself. Jno. 1:4; Jno. 10:10; Jno. 11:25; Jno. 14:6; Jno. 5:40.

IV. **Witness of the Spirit.** Rom. 8:16; Jno. 8:12. (a) By fruits of Spirit. Matt. 7:20; Gal. 5:22, 23. (b) Gifts of the Spirit. Rom. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12. Many men and women have gifts of the Spirit without fruit of the Spirit. God uses them wonderfully along some lines, yet there is glaring inconsistency in the life; as yet no fruit of the Spirit. This is often a stumbling block to us. We are loth to be taught of God by those or through those whose lives we cannot approve. We need to learn God can use anything. I Cor. 1:27-29. His word does not depend upon the instrument. A life where gifts and fruit go together is doubly powerful.

V. **By fellowship with God and man.** I Jno. 1:7; I Jno. 3:14. We love to go to God—be with Christians.

VI. **By our growth.** Eph. 4:13-15; Psa. 1:3. Increase of faith. Power in prayer. Victory over sin. Knowledge of God's Word.

VII. **By our service or daily living.** Matt. 7:16-20; Jno. 15:2, 4, 8, 16.

This can be used as an all round test for ourselves and all others bearing the name—Christian.

BIBLE STUDY.

LESSON VI.

The Bible is a compilation of 66 books by over 40 different authors all having one theme:

	as Creator and Father,	and
God	as Son and Saviour,	His Dealings
	as Holy Spirit and Enlightener,	with Men.

Ways the Bible should be read or studied:

I. **With common sense.** As other books, consecutively; in relation to context; not perverting scripture.

II. **Read independently.** Do not depend upon the many religious books, or some one else's interpretation or experience. Get an experience of your own. Get a knowledge of your own. Let the prayer of the blind be ours, "Lighten our darkness, O Lord!"

III. **Read continuously,** again and again. Until you can tell the story of the book. Get a general view of it. Become so familiar with it that the book finally falls into divisions or headings, thus making your own outlines. See Dr. Gray's Synthetic Outlines.

IV. **Read meditatively,** for devotions. Psalm I. Psalms prepare for, incline to, and express worship. Epistles are helps to Daily Christians living, disciplining, cleansing, sanctifying by the "washing of the Word." Proverbs the guide for daily action telling what will happen if you obey God's law and the consequences if you don't. The Acts and I John for young converts. Hosea for backsliders. Ezra and Nehemiah when a church is to be erected or rebuilt. Analytical and doctrinal work for students and teachers. 2 Tim. 2: 15.

V. **Read prayerfully.** Any book is better known and understood for having talked with its author.

VI. **Read biographically.** Take any life—Moses, Joseph, David, Daniel, Paul. Give them their work, message, relation to their time, characteristics and lessons of their lives.

VII. **Historically.** Relation to actual events; effects on world's action; movement of nations; dispensational truth. Geographical location of places, light on customs, flora, fauna, etc. By this method learning and teaching the stories of the Bible objectively, using models, pictures, maps, etc., to deepen and fasten impressions of truth.

VIII. **Test studying.** Read, write or commit text and its location, testing knowledge in hand either by yourself or with some other person. Book, chapter and verse known, you can handle any kind of a Bible anywhere. This is almost an absolute necessity for personal work.

IX. **By chapter.** Reading four times to get first its subject, next its leading lesson, then the best verse to commit, and last names of principal person. After the book is completed an outline of the books can easily be made from the chapter subjects.

The chapter summary method is used at the Moody Bible Institute, and blanks can be obtained from them for this course.

X. **Topically or doctrinally,** viz: **Satan,** who he is, how he works, Christ's victory over him, his final defeat and end (see Dr. Nave's Topical Bible). What does the Bible teach about God—Man—Christ—Heaven? (See Dr. Torrey's "What the Bible Teaches.")

XI. **Inductively.** Ask questions concerning a book and answer them. When? Where? Why? How written? Its object or purpose? What does it mean to me?

XII. **Deductively.** Take a book verse by verse, word by word, the thought in detail with its relation to the whole book. Classify results under headings of the principal subjects for a summary of each book.

Have the class test each kind of Bible study.

PRAYER.

LESSON VII.

To the natural mind prayer is a greater mystery than life itself, yet elusive and immaterial as it seems to the human, the instinct of prayer is as universal as that of religion. Men everywhere, when helpless under the stress of great need or in times of peril, cry out for their gods to save them. But

I. **True prayer is an interchange of thought with God.** Isa. 55:6-11. This implies a definite meeting of mighty God and helpless man, by this interchange of thought, consciousness of God and self-revelation, actual results follow. "His word shall not return unto him void." Knowing this, we realize that the place of prayer is holy ground. We may find out in this way if we yet know how to pray, for prayer is not only talking to God, it is talking with him and getting answers that change our lives.

II. **Our basis for prayer.**

1. We base our claim upon God's own word, giving over 3,000 promises, which he is ready to fulfill. Jer. 29:11-13.

2. We may ask anything which is for God's glory. Isa. 58:8; Isa. 43:7; 2 Cor. 1:20.

3. We may ask in Jesus' name or for his name's sake. Acts 10:43; I Jno. 2:12; Psa. 23:3; Jer. 14:7-21; Jno. 14:13; Jno. 15:16; Jno. 16:23; Dan. 9:19.

4. Because our desires are the will of God. I Jno. 5:14, 15.

5. On account of faithfulness of God. Deut. 7:9; I Jno. 1:9; 1 Thess. 5:24; 2 Thess. 3:3; 2 Tim. 2:13; Psa. 119:90; righteousness of God—Dan. 9:7; Ezra 9:15; Micah 6:5; Isa. 42:6; Psa. 116:4-6; Psa. 143:11; 2 Pet. 1:1; 1 Jno. 2:1-2; mercy of God—Dan. 9:9, 18; Psa. 103:8, 11, 17; Titus 3:5; Isa. 54:7, 8; Psa. 109:21, 26; Psa. 44:26.

III. **Growth in Prayer.** From the first feeble petition we grow in grace and learn to pray by praying, so if we cannot pray we may pray till we can. In looking over the prayers of the Bible, Abraham, Gen. 7; David's Psalms and 1 Chron. 29; Solomon, 2 Chron. 6:14; Elijah, 1 Kings 17-18-19; Elisha, 2 Kings 6; Daniel 2; Hannah, 1 Sam. 1; Hab. 3; Hezekiah, Isa. 37, 38; Manoah, Judges 13; Moses, Ex. 32-33, Num. 10, 11, 12, 14, 27, Deut. 3; the thief, Luke 23; Jesus, Matt. 11-26-27, Jno. 11, 12, 17; Pharisee and Publican, Luke 18, we find these prayers embrace petition, supplication, intercession, worship, thanksgiving. We are more or less like beggars in relation to our Heavenly Father, constantly asking "Give me this! Give me that! I want it or I need it!" Sometimes over and over, like a spoiled child, and our crying drowns his still small voice that is telling us what is best for us. After real meetings with God we realize more fully the power he has placed in our hands; we trust him more, catch dimly the largeness of his spirit, and begin to intercede for others, our petitions having been met exceedingly abundantly, above all we could ask or think. Supplication finds a place in our prayers because God is holy; we have sinned and are unworthy his presence. We can but acknowledge the difference, confess our sins and entreat for the love and forgiveness so freely bestowed through his mercy and grace. God gives a special work of intercession to the aged—shut-ins—timid—busily employed—those whom circumstances keep from other service. Petition granted, entreaty heard, new revelations of his goodness, how can we help thanking and praising him. Morning, noon and night in social or family prayer, or secret devotions, the heart of the true child of God lifts itself to meet him. No matter how familiar or strange the church, how poor or masterly the choir, how rich or

meagre the fare set forth by God's messenger in the pulpit, realizing who and what he is, we go to his house to worship him and come away with the blessing of the secret delight of his presence.

IV. **Power in prayer.** Men of prayer are men of power. We want our lives to count. We long for answered prayers. We must meet God's conditions—humility, 2 Chron. 7:14; true heart, Heb. 10:22; submission to God's will, I Jno. 5:14, Luke 22:42; a forgiving spirit, Matt. 6:12; confidence in God, Psa. 56:9; keep God's commandments, I Jno. 3:22; abide in Christ, Jno. 15:7.

The legend is told of the monk who went into the pulpit and preached so that the people were moved. After he went home God told him

"Thy word had been naught
But for the prayer
Of the poor beggar
Who sat on the stair."

Answer to prayer is denied those who are proud, Job 35:12, 13; hypocrites, Job 27:8, 9; those living in sin, Isa. 59:3; forsake God, Jer. 14:10, 12; regard iniquity in the heart, Psa. 66:18; oppress saints and the poor, Micah 3:2-4, Prov. 21:13; who hear not the law, Prov. 28:9; who offer unworthy service, Mal. 1:7-9.

The Holy Spirit gives power in prayer, teaches us how to pray, asks only that which is God's will. Zech. 12:10; Rom. 8:15, 26; Gal. 4:6.

Have the class come before God with the real heart-cry, "Lord, teach us to pray," and renew church covenant and consecration.

SERVICE.

LESSON VIII.

The deeper life, the higher life, the life more abundant in service really means a life full of the power of the Holy Spirit. There is a three-fold ministry open to each of us.

I. **Through our words.** As an apostle, one sent forth, a herald, a messenger, 2 Cor. 5:20, Acts 20:24; an evangelist, Eph. 4:11, Rom. 10:14; as teacher, Prov. 22:17-21, I Cor. 12:28, 29, Gal. 6:6, Col. 1:29, Heb. 5:12; as intercessor, praying through the Holy Spirit, Jno. 17, Rom. 1:9, 10, 2 Tim. 1:3, 1 Tim. 2:1-4.

II. **Through our works.** Quantity and quality in proportion to the power of the Holy Spirit. Energy of the flesh is not the energy of God. Deeds done for self-glory are less than nothing. The most perfect church organizations simply fill the air with the clank of their own machinery without one spark of dynamic power unless they are controlled by the Holy Spirit. John 15:5; John 5:19-21; John 16:8-10.

III. **Through our lives.** Personality counts with God. It was his way of teaching men life through the life of the man Christ Jesus. Character is what we really are. To come into the presence of some men and women is to be conscious of the presence of God. Col. 4:17; I Pet. 4:10. If our service depends upon the power of the Holy Spirit, what do we know of him and how may we have him in our lives? In the Old Testament he is spoken of as the Spirit of the Lord. It was he who spoke through the prophets. I Pet. 1:11, 12; 2 Pet. 1:21; Ezekiel; Daniel. In the case of Christ he is spoken of as the Paraclete manifested in form of a dove. Matt. 3:16; Luke 3:22.

IV. **Birth of Holy Spirit for service** as a definite personality in the world, Acts 2, accompanied the same as birth of Saviour by unusual phenomena, tongues of fire, mighty wind, each man heard in his own language, effect upon the disciples changing, terrorstricken, ignorant fishermen into heroic witnesses, workers and martyrs. Every believer in Jesus has his spirit, but not the spirit with power for service. It came upon him even as the Son of Man in a special way. May everyone have it? Luke 11:13; Acts 1:8. Why doesn't everybody have it then? They don't want it. Self-satisfied. Timid, afraid to ask or take what God has for them. Sometimes Jesus isn't yet glorified in the life. Jno. 7:39.

V. **Office of the Holy Spirit.** Author and giver of spiritual life, Job 33:4, Jno. 3:5, 6; author of scripture, 2 Pet. 1:21; quickener and renewer of life, Titus 3:5, I Pet. 3:18; abiding presence, John 14:16, Jno. 16:13, Jno. 14:26; comforter, guide and teacher, Jno. 14:26; source of power, Acts 1:8.

VI. **Work of the Holy Spirit.** Reprove the world, Jno. 16:8; convict of sin, Jno. 16:9; of righteousness, Jno. 16:10; of judgment, Jno. 16:11; reveal Christ, Jno. 16:14; witness with our spirits, Rom. 8:16; sanctifies men through the truth, 2 Thess. 2:13.

VII. **Gifts and fruit of Spirit.** With both a life doubly powerful, I Cor. 12; Eph. 4:11; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:9; Rom. 12:6-21.

VIII. **Baptism of the Holy Spirit.** Acts 1:8; Acts 2:2-4; Acts 8:15-17; Acts 11:15, 16; I Cor. 6:11, 19. The book of the Acts might well be outlined by saying "The Acts of the Holy Spirit."

Why we do not have the Holy Ghost with power. Because of our treatment of him. Resist not, Acts 7; quench not, I Thess. 5:19; grieve not, Eph. 4:30.

We do not listen when the Spirit calls; we form purposes and let them die without action; we countenance things in our lives with which he will not dwell.

Acts 19:2-6. Have ye received the Holy Ghost? Do we desire to have our lives count more for God? Shall we have his gift of himself for power? Follow with a definite prayer time for the power of the Holy Spirit.

INEXHAUSTABLE RICHES OF THE BIBLE.

By Rev. F. B. Meyer, B. A., London, Eng.

In answer to this plea for Scripture Exposition, it might be answered that the times need to be preached to, and that men must be up to date in their choice of themes. But such criticism ignores the fact that:

Human life in its essential features does not vary from one age to another. Whether lived in the gray dawn of history or in the New York Broadway, the play of human passion, of love and hate, of jealousy and revenge, of hope or foreboding, is identical. The dress, speech, accessories may differ, but all this is superficial and transitory; the woman that wore the jewels of an Egyptian sarcophagus was actuated by the same motives as her sister in the height of Parisian fashion. It is for this reason that the drama of every age retains its fascination for all succeeding ones. Neither Aristophanes, nor Moliere, nor Shakespeare can grow old. Drama possesses this quality because it holds the mirror to the heart and unveils its most secret passages.

What is true of the drama is equally true of Scripture. Humanity retains with unerring precision whatever is true of itself, whatever portrays the inner working of heart and mind, which no man could confess to his fellows, but every man recognizes when set out before him. With infinite relish, therefore, generation repeated to generation the story of Abraham and Isaac, of Esau and Jacob, of Joseph and his brethren, of Moses and Aaron, and of all the other good men and bad, who pass before us in the ever-shifting panorama. These stories have been passed on from lip to lip under the shadow of the pyramids, and on the sands of the desert, by the Bedouin, the Mesopotamian, the Syrian and the Hebrew. The attrition of the ages has moulded, rounded and smoothed them as the ocean waters the pebbles or the brooks the swirling stones. The very ease with which they unfold, the elimination of all extraneous matter, the clear-cut sentences which reveal tracks of character as lightning at night reveals a landscape, all prove the charm, the spell, the attraction which these ancient records have wielded. To be unfamiliar with them is to be uneducated, and miss the chief opportunity of becoming acquainted with the throbbing heart of humanity. The Bible is not only the Word of God, but

the revelation of man. It is the university of the world. Therefore to unfold its story in successive discourses is to enchain the interest of one's audience and procure a profound assent. The bad man recognizes the workings of his own evil nature; the weak man sees the reflection of his own broken resolution and foiled purposes; the tempted perceives that other men have trodden the valley before him and encountered the straddling form of Apollyon; whilst the tempest-tossed learn that the storms that sweep their sky have spent themselves on others, and have been succeeded by blue skies and clear shining. "If there come in one unbelieving or unlearned, he is reproved of all, he is judged by all; the secrets of his heart are made manifest; and so he will fall down on his face, and worship God, declaring that God is in you and truth."

When Nathan desired to convict David of his sin, he was too wise to approach the royal conscience by a direct attack. He would have found the gates closed, the portcullis down, and the drawbridge up. But he interested him in a narrative, perhaps drawn from real life, or at least quite likely to have happened. The scene of the story and its accompaniments were so dissimilar to those of the royal palace, that the shy conscience of the criminal never suspected that it was being approached, and it was only when the royal judgments had been unhesitatingly expressed that the veil was suddenly dropped, and the rapier was thrust to the dividing of soul and spirit, of its joints and marrow. Deal with a man directly, and he resents the attack; deal with him implicitly and indirectly, and before he is aware, he stands before the judgment-seat and is speechless before its award. There is no man so likely to speak to his times as the conscientious expositor of Scripture. He is always up-to-date. In his congregation there is almost certainly a Peter with his impulse, a John with his fervor and imagination, a calculating Judas, a reflective and hesitating Thomas, a cool, practical Andrew. Pilate may be there, cruel, crafty and calculating, which is the main and likeliest chance. Herodias is sitting next to Martha, and Mary of Magdala to Mary of Bethany. It is impossible to delineate the character, the salient features, the beauty or blemish of any of these without compelling their modern counterparts to behold their faces in a mirror.

The gist of much of the New Testament is also intended to prove that the attitude of the soul towards God is practically

and essentially the same in every age. Paul, for instance, argues that when Abram believed God, he exercised the same faith as we do when we "believe on Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our trespasses and was raised for our justification." And the imputation of righteousness, which reckons the sinner of today, justified and accepted is not otherwise than that which operated in the case of the patriarch, of whom it is said that "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto Him for righteousness." The expositor of Genesis will, therefore, find himself in the midst of New Testament truth. When expounding the Book of Judges and retelling the stories of Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, he will be describing the faith which dwelt in its most developed form in Jesus, the Author and Finisher of Faith," who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross, despising the shame."

It is instructive to consider how much of the New Testament is expository of the Old. We may without exaggeration describe Matthew's gospel as an Exposition of the Royal Psalms and prophecies. Whilst Mark views our Lord as the servant of God, and Luke in His human aspects, Matthew's soul is filled with His supreme claim as "Son of David." In his pages, what Isaiah and Jeremiah, Zechariah and Daniel, said about the King and His Kingdom is carefully selected and set forth. He reads the secrets that Psalmists set to harp-music, and shows their fulfillment in the Redeemer. As King He was to ride the ass' colt; as foundation-stone He was to be rejected of the builders; but as Lord He was to sit on the right hand of God, and though born of a human mother, His goings forth were of old, even from everlasting. Here is the key for unlocking closed doors. Here is the die from which all those precious well-worn coins were minted. Here is He of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write.

But still more markedly the Epistle to the Hebrews is an exposition of the old book of Leviticus. Those glowing paragraphs may have been originally given as expositions. It does not require a great effort of the imagination to picture Apollos, who had as often been credited with the authorship of this Epistle, delivering it just as a series of expositions in the synagogue at Ephesus. He was mighty in the Scriptures, we are told. What more likely than that he should take up one of the most profound of its books for systematic treatment? He would

be inclined thereto by his early training at Alexandria, where Hebrewism was strong, but the outward observance of Levitical ritual was impossible. The germ of these discourses may have been suggested during his residence there, in the effort to reconcile the teachings of Jesus being the Lamb of God with the prescriptions of the ancient law. When he re-delivered his expositions at Ephesus, teaching the things concerning Jesus "with all the carefulness," Priscilla and Aquila were arrested and deeply interested in the young Apostle, so fervent, so bold, so eloquent, and took him to lodge with them, and expounded the way of God more carefully. It may be, therefore, that in this Epistle, which is characterized by so many of the qualities of the Alexandrian, bears the last touches of his devoted friends. Later critics have even credited Priscilla as the authoress. There may be truth in the older hypothesis which inscribed the name of Apollos on the title-page, and this more recent one. We may have a joint-production, the main argument elaborated by Apollos, while Priscilla contributed the annotations. The comment of Luke the historian is, therefore, hardly to be wondered at. "When he was come, he helped them much which had believed through grace." Such preaching as this could hardly fail to be helpful.

The Book of Revelation may also be said to be an exposition of the Book of Daniel. The ministry of the watcher-angels, their conflicts with strong resistance in the heavenly graces, their interest in our strifes and tears and prayers, are dwelt upon at length, expanded and expounded until we see their forms in rainbows and suns, and hear their trumpets sounding from star to star, and detect their resonant voices as they call to each other in the exercise of their patrol through the worlds. This great Babylon is explained to mean not only the royal dwelling-place of Nebuchadnezzar, which he built by the might of his power and the glory of his majesty, but the spirit of human society which magnifies the creature more than the Creator, and sets itself to persecute the saints. The witness borne by the Hebrew youths amid the luxuries of the palace and by their erectness amid the prostrate crowds, is shown to have its analogies in every age, and especially in the two witnesses who lie unburied in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also the Lord was crucified. But the breath of God entered into them and they stood on

their feet. The wild beasts of Daniel's vision reappear in the Apocalypse as visions of great kingdoms which set themselves against the Lord and against his Christ. The closing chapter of Daniel seems to lie at the heart of all those glimpses of the Resurrection which fill the latter pages of the Apocalypse, and the Angel of Dan. 12:7, cries to the Angel of Rev. 10:6. Of the many expositions of Daniel we have followed, John's was the first.

It is necessary, therefore, that no teacher or preacher should quote texts at random from any part of Scripture, without staying to consider the stage in the progressive development of truth, out of which that fragment was spoken. The hurling of texts by one school of theologians at another is, to say the least, unseemly, and it may be highly misleading, because in the heat of argument there may be little or no regard to the precise value that should be attached to this or the other passage. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable, but the Divine element was constantly affected by its human medium, precisely as the expression of the nature of Jesus grew and gathered strength with the development of His soul, and mind, and body. There is a precise analogy between the advancing expression of truth from Genesis to Revelation, and of the utterance of the Divine Word from the babblings of childhood to the teaching of the forty days during which He tarried after His resurrection. Luke tells us that He began to do and teach until the day that He was taken up.

This progress is very remarkable when we study the Bible as a whole. We open it at the words, "In the Beginning God created the heavens and the earth" but how stately and entrancing is the steady sweep of the ascending stairway, which lands us finally in the cry, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." To read through the Koran is to be oppressed by an unconnected, shapeless mass of statements, more or less incongruous; but to read the Bible is to become educated by an orderly scheme of advancing doctrines. Take its teaching as to immortality, for instance. What a leaven of difference there is between the pessimism of Ecclesiastes and the trumpet note of I Cor. 15!

The New Testament bears a striking testimony to the same law. We begin with the Person of Christ and the story of His manifestation in the flesh. We witness His miracles, wonder at his wonderful words, behold the expanding fullness of his

program, and see His ministry approaching its climax. Then suddenly a great change occurs; we pass from the Synoptic gospels and come under the teaching of John, who draws aside the veil and we behold His glory, the glory of the only-begotten Son of God. When we read the Synoptics, we are walking with Christ along the road to Emmaus, with our hearts indeed burning, but our eyes holden; but in the Fourth Gospel our eyes are opened and we know Him for what He is. Is not this a distinct development of His character and glory.

We close the gospels and open the Acts of the Apostles, and again find ourselves in the midst of movement. We cannot see or touch the Lord, but He is as literally present as in the days of His flesh. He is there as a spiritual presence, providing for difficulties and perplexities; building up the temple of God, succoring, comforting, moulding, shaping, directing, leading his people to new triumphs, experiences and participations of the divine life. There is surely movement here. The natural and physical has made way for the spiritual and eternal. "That is not first, which is spiritual, but that which is natural; afterward that which is spiritual." "The first man is of the earth, earthly; the second man is the Lord from Heaven."

When we turn from the Acts of the Apostles to the Epistles, the movement is still more apparent. There were many things which our Lord desired to communicate during the days of his flesh, but his apostles could not bear them, though they were of the highest moment. But He promised the Spirit of Truth to guide them unto all the truth. That word was carefully chosen to indicate the successive steps by which they were to be led forward, and shewn plainly the truth as it is in Jesus. The earlier teaching had anticipated the coming of a day in which many things would be unfolded to them for communication to the world, and that happy day had now arrived. At first they were taught as those who were with Jesus, afterwards as being in Christ. They knew that He was in the Father, and they in Him, and He in them.

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